

A SOBER
APPEAL
TO A
TURK or an INDIAN,
CONCERNING

The Plain Sense of Scripture, relating
to the TRINITY.

Being an Answer to

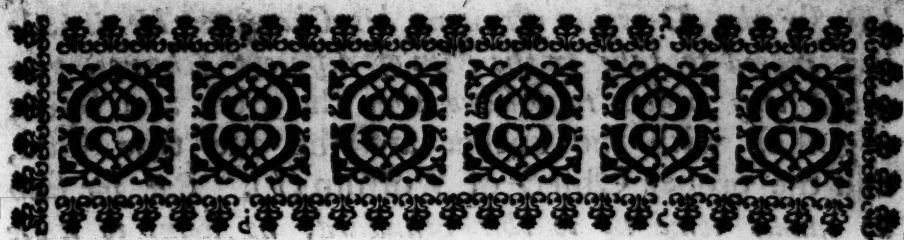
Mr. J. WATTS's late Book, intituled, *The Christian
Doctrine of the Trinity, or Father, Son, and Spirit,
Three Persons and One God, asserted and proved, by
plain Evidence of Scripture, without the Aid or Incum-
brance of Human Schemes.*

*Who will have all Men to be saved, and to come to the Know-
ledge of the Truth. For there is ONE GOD, and
ONE MEDIATOR between GOD and Men,
the Man Christ Jesus, 1 Tim. 2. 4, 5.*

L O N D O N,

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T H E

P R E F A C E.

MR. Watts led me the Way in making this Appeal. He is willing to leave it to the Judgment of a Turk or an Indian, whether the plain and express Scripture contain'd in his Citations, doth not sufficiently distinguish Three Personal Agents (a). Those who cannot assent to his Doctrine of the Trinity, I am persuaded would be glad to have any such impartial Persons to appeal to.

When Men and Women have been from their earliest Childhood possess'd with a sacred Veneration for a mysterious Doctrine, and upon any one's calling it in question have been terrify'd with the Outcry of damnable Heresy; and have been wrought up even to a Height of Rage and Fury against such as should venture to oppose it, being taught to look upon them as Men abandon'd of God, given up to a reprobate Mind, Enemies to the Blessed Redeemer, and attempting to poison the Souls of Men; when this is the Case, what Heart can a Man have to speak for himself, or what can he expect when such are to be his Judges?

I don't reckon Mr. Watts of this Number: It appears by his Writings that he is of a different Spirit from

from many of his Party: Yet we see how the Concern he has for the Doctrine straitens his Charity. He is willing indeed to take in the Men of different Schemes, provided they profess to believe that the Son and Spirit together with the Father are the one true God, and the proper Object of Worship (b). But for such as cannot come up to this Standard, he seems to leave them under the Censure of Denying the Lord that bought them, and to represent them as guilty of damnable Heresies, which will bring upon the Professors of them swift Destruction (c). If the charitable Mr. Watts can have no Charity for these Men, and thinks himself obliged, by the Regard he hath to the Honour of the Christian Faith and of Christ his Lord and his God, to leave them under these severe Censures; what may they expect from others, who have been all their Life-time utter Strangers to any Freedom of Thought, and have not the hundredth part of his good Sense or good Temper to allay the Heat of their Zeal? May one that is branded as an Arian, &c. expect that such will give him a fair Hearing; if indeed they might be prevail'd with to give him Liberty to speak for himself?

I think any one may easily see, on which Side in this Controversy there is like to be most of Prejudice and Prepossession. But, whereas both sides are apt to cry out of Prejudice, &c. when those of the contrary Party do not yield to the Arguments brought against them, one would be ready to wish that we could meet with some honest Turk or Indian that was capable of reading our Scriptures. As Mr. Watts could venture to appeal to such a Person for the Plainness of the Account the Scripture gives of the Distinction of Personal Agents in the Trinity; so I doubt not but the Unitarians would be as willing to appeal to him with respect to the other Part of the Doctrine also, viz. the Divinity of the Two Persons, the Son
and

(b) P. 246, 247.

(c) P. 248.

and the Spirit; i. e. whether the Scripture declares them to be the same one God with the Father.

Let us then for once suppose that some honest Turk or Indian were come among us, a Man of plain good Sense, and one who had just Notions of Natural Religion: we will suppose also that he were capable of reading our Bible; and were in some measure acquainted with it, but had known nothing of our Controversy about the Trinity. Mr. Watts presents his Book to this Person, asserting that Father, Son and Spirit, are three Persons and the One God; and endeavours to convince him that this is the plain Christian Doctrine of the Trinity, and a Fundamental Point of our Religion: I on the other hand, lay before him what I think a more just and natural Account of the Christian Doctrine, and endeavour to shew what little Foundation there is in Scripture for Mr. Watts's Opinion. This is what I propose in the following Treatise.

I am of Mr. Watts's Mind, that a Subject of this Nature ought to be treated with Gravity and Sobriety: Tho I don't think a Person is presently to be charged with Profaneness, because he takes more Liberty in exposing the Absurdity and Inconsistency of Schemes that Men have devised, than it may be the Admirers of such Schemes can well bear with. A Man may have a just Veneration for Divine Revelation, while he allows himself sometimes to make free with Mysteries of Man's Invention; tho such as have a Fondness for them, are wont to stamp a Sacredness upon them. But, since Mr. Watts hath wisely dropt, as far as possible, all human Explications, and pleads only for that which appears to him to be the direct obvious Doctrine of the Bible, and that such as he takes to be of the utmost Importance in our Religion; I think it very proper to be serious in a Debate of this Nature. I must own, I think the Honour of Christianity very much concerned in the right stating of this Point of Doctrine, tho I am far from thinking that Mens Salvation depends upon their having right Notions of it.

In addressing my self to such a Person as I have suppos'd, and would now set up as an Umpire between us,

I shall confine my self, as far as may be, to what might be proper to be said to such a Person. Mr. Watts says, he writes not for the Learned, but for common Christians; I do so too. For this Reason I have allow'd my self to be more diffuse, and have been less careful to avoid Repetition of the same Things upon different Occasions, than I would have been had I sought only to please the nice and curious Reader. Some Things that might seem to be more out of the way of common Readers and above their Reach, I have thrown into the Margin.

There is one thing it may not be amiss to take notice of here: in pressing an Argument, or interpreting a Text of Scripture, &c. I have sometimes appeal'd to the common Sense and Understanding of Men: Some weak and angry People will, perhaps be offended at this, and take it as a representing those who differ from us as void of common Sense. Such may consider, that all Arguing is indeed Appealing to the common Reason and Understanding of Mankind. But not to enter upon a tedious Apology, I shall only say in short, (if that may be any Check to their Resentment) that notwithstanding any thing of this Nature that may occur in the Dispute, I can, and do believe that there are Thousands among them who differ from me in this Controversy, vastly superior to me in Ability of Understanding, and in all other valuable Accomplishments.

I shall detain the Reader no longer by way of Preface. I now beg leave to address my self in the following manner to our supposed Arbitrator.

A S O B E R
A P P E A L, &c.

YOU have had the sacred Oracles of our Religion laid before you, wherein God hath made a Revelation of Himself to Men. Whether in your careful Perusal of them, it did ever enter into your Mind to conceive of the **ONE GOD**, there so much spoken of, as being *Three distinct Personal Agents*, you your self best know. However, now you have seen this Notion asserted, and largely insisted on as one principal Article of our Religion, and a necessary Part of the true saving Knowledge of God.

§. I. I may very well suppose that such a Doctrine as this, must at first View appear very strange and surprizing; being so very different from the Notion that all Mankind have naturally entertained concerning the Blessed God. But you will own with us, that this alone cannot be a sufficient Reason for rejecting it. No doubt God may reveal somewhat concerning Himself, which Men had no Apprehension of before.

We grant, This Notion hath for a considerable time generally obtained among Christians; and learned Men have raised Schemes upon it, in order to explain it and account for it, as my Friend hath hinted to you. Notwithstanding

this, there are many Christians who do not believe that our Scriptures teach any such thing; or that it was so much as known or heard of among the first and earliest Professors of our Religion. We are not now to enquire what was the Opinion of the *Primitive Christians*, but wholly to confine ourselves to the Writings you have read, which we receive as the infallible Revelation of God, and both of us own to be the *Only Standard* of Christian Doctrine: And my Business will be, only to shew you that there is no just Foundation for this Doctrine of theirs in those sacred Writings.

§. 2. It may be, Sir, you will think it strange, that we who pretend to have a clear Revelation from God, should yet differ so much about the Notion of God Himself. Let me say somewhat to this, before I enter upon the Matter in dispute between us; lest this very Dispute should prejudice you against the Revelation it self.

We do acknowledge that the Revelation is clear in all that is necessary for us to know concerning God and Jesus Christ, in order to the bringing us to Happiness. There are plainly revealed the Perfections of the Divine Nature, the Relation we stand in to God, the great Benefits he hath conferred upon us, and the Duty we owe to Him; what *Christ* hath done for us, what we are to expect from him, and his Sufficiency to accomplish this; what the *Spirit of God* is to do in us, and how we are to carry it towards him. He that hath such Knowledge of *God* and his Perfections, as doth beget a sincere Love to Him, and willing Obedience according to the Measure of Light he attains; He that hath such Faith in *Christ*, as persuades the Soul to embrace him as the only Saviour, and to *come to God by Him*; such Faith as *purifies the Heart* and *works by Love*, in keeping his Commandments and following his Example; such regard to the Spirit of God, as engages a Man with becoming Earnestness to seek unto God for him, as makes him careful not to quench his Motions, not to grieve him, not to *walk after the Flesh but after the Spirit*; such Person hath that Knowledge of *God*, and of *Christ*, and of the *Spirit*, as shall infallibly bring him to Heaven. He is hereby made meet for it, and shall at last be received there. This the Scriptures do abundantly declare. And thus the Revelation may attain its End, and we receive the Advantage of it, however we may differ about the Notion of the *Three Persons being the One God*.

Now

Now if the Revelation answers the great End and Design, which is to bring such as truly give up themselves to the Conduct of it, to love and serve God here, and to enjoy him for ever, it is enough; we have Reason to be thankful for it; God is not obliged, nor hath he any where engaged himself to prevent our Mistakes in any Matter whatsoever, not interfering with, or destructive of this great Design of giving a Revelation to Men. And if such Mistakes themselves shall not prejudice the Salvation of a good Man, you will easily conclude, that much less will the mistaken and uncharitable Censures of others hurt him. These have indeed mischievous Consequences here; and it concerns every Christian to be cautious in this respect; but none can think that a good Man shall be shut out of Heaven, because some other good Men, while here on Earth, through Mistake, Passion and Prejudice, thought him not fit to come there.

I was willing to premise this Remark, lest such a Debate as this should give occasion for any Prejudice against the Revelation it self, which we both own and value, and would be glad to see propagated through the whole World.

§. 3. And now, Sir, you will give me leave to consider what our Friend hath produced from the sacred Writings to establish this Doctrine, which he looks upon as of the greatest Importance in our Religion, and imagines to be so very plain and obvious in the Scriptures, that no Man can miss it in reading the Bible, but thro some faulty Prejudice. (a)

There may be some among us, as there are in all Religions, furious Zealots, who would presently be for stopping the Mouth of any Opposer, saying, *Away with such a Fellow from the Earth; it is not fit he should live.* (b) This they think the shortest, easiest and most effectual Way of maintaining the Truth. But the Author of this Treatise which hath now been put into your Hands, is not one of these. He hath too much Sense, and too much good Nature, to come into such Measures; and more Regard to the Honour of our Religion, than to represent it as needing such Methods to establish it, or warranting such Practices. And therefore I question not but himself will readily allow me to lay before you my different Sentiments, and will freely consent that you should hear, what I or any Man hath to say.

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say against his Notion, as you have now seen what he hath to say for it.

The main of our Enquiry will be, Whether the Arguments he hath produced, do with sufficient Evidence prove it to be the Doctrine of Scripture; that *Father, Son, and Spirit are Three Persons and the One God*. In order to judge of this Matter, it will be proper, in the *first Place*, to consider the Doctrine it self; and to endeavour as far as we can to understand, What our Friend means by this Assertion. I will in the *next Place* go with you through the Bible, and see if we can find that it ever speaks of God as being *Three Persons*, or whether it doth not on the contrary always speak of God as being ONE PERSON, according to the Notion that Mankind hath always had of one single Person. And then, *Thirdly*, I shall particularly consider what our Author hath produced from Scripture to give countenance to his Notion; and, as he thinks, invincibly to prove it. Having done this, I hope to convince you that there is no necessity of inferring so strange a Doctrine from any Expressions of Scripture, or from any Account of Matters there given; but that all may be understood in a perfect Consistency with the whole current Doctrine, and the exprefs Declarations of Scripture, concerning *The One God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*.

S. 4. Let us begin then with the Doctrine it self. Here it is asserted that *The Father, Son, and Spirit are Three Persons and One God*. This our Friend in his Preface (c) calls the plain naked Doctrine of Scripture concerning the Trinity. He doth not indeed pretend that this is the exprefs Assertion of Scripture (d); it is what he thinks is fairly drawn out of it (e). And since this is not a Proposition found in Scripture (not the Words which God himself hath any where spoken) but only what our Friend and others like-minded have drawn out of the Word of God; we may justly demand of him the true precise Meaning of the Terms he makes use of. If God had seen fit thus to exprefs himself, we should be obliged to believe that the Words did contain a certain Truth, tho we might not be able to affix the certain determinate Sense of them. But when Men will frame a Proposition, and require our Belief of it, as containing an essential Point of Christian Doctrine,

(c) *Christ. Doctr.* p. 8.

(d) P. 167.

(e) *Pref.* p. 8.

Doctrine, you will own, Sir, it is but reasonable that they should make their own Proposition *intelligible* to us, that we may know what it is we are to believe.

Our Friend may think that he hath acted very prudently in freeing himself from the *Incumbrances* of any of the particular Schemes by which some have attempted to explain this strange Doctrine; but I hope he will not be angry, if I tell him that he must not think to escape so. We desire him to explain his own Terms. He must not think to evade this, by saying, He will not undertake to shew *how* Three are One, or how to reconcile their Unity and Diversity. (f) Let him tell us what he understands by the Term *Three Persons*, and by the Term *One God*.

There is no Man, that I know of, but will readily profess to believe many things concerning God, which he doth not pretend to explain as to the *Manner* of them. And indeed who, that hath consider'd Matters, will not own as much with respect to almost every thing in Nature? The only Thing we desire, is, that we may know what it is we are to believe, and that they would affix such Meaning to the several Parts of the Proposition they require us to assent to, as may make the Proposition consistent with it self. This is very different from explaining the *Modus* or Manner of the Things themselves. (g) I believe that God knows all Things;

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(f) Prop. V. §. 14.

(g) The Defenders of this Doctrine do generally confound these, and by that means would bring themselves off, when we press them to explain their Notion. See an Instance in Dr. *Waterland's Queries*, p. 314. where he owns that the *Ideas* are *seemingly*, not really repugnant. 'We see not perfectly how this is reconciled with the Belief of One God, as we see not how Prescience is reconciled with future Contingences.' But with the Dr's Leave, there is a manifest Difference in these two Cases. There is no Repugnancy at all between the Idea of *Prescience* and the Idea of *future Contingences*; i. e. there is nothing in the Idea of Prescience that doth destroy, or is inconsistent with, the Idea of a free Action. How a free Action may come to be known is another Question. (These are as plainly different as my knowing a Thing that is past, and the Way whereby I know it.) But it is manifest there is no Contradiction in the Two Ideas; the Idea of Prescience and the Idea of a free Action may both subsist together in the Mind. There is not a *seeming Repugnancy*. But in the Case the Dr. puts, *The Belief of Three Persons*

I understand very well what I mean by *God's knowing the Thoughts of Men*: But I don't pretend to conceive *how* the All-perfect Mind hath at the same Time a clear distinct View

sans every one singly God, and All together One God; here is a Repugnancy of the Ideas themselves. The Idea of *All together being One God*, destroys the Notion of *Three being singly God*; so that the Two Parts of the Proposition are not consistent. And while they seem to me Repugnant, *i. e.* while the Ideas do appear to me to be Inconsistent, how is it possible that such a Proposition should be the Object of my Assent? It is true, a Proposition may at first seem to carry in it a Contradiction, and afterwards I may perceive that there is really no Contradiction in it; but *then* it doth no longer seem repugnant. But *while* it seems so, I don't see how it is possible in the Nature of the Thing, that I should give Assent to it. For what is this, but to require that the Mind should join Ideas together, while it sees them to be incompatible, *i. e.* that it should see and acknowledge them to be connected, at the same Time that it sees and apprehends them to be separated? Nor will it help the Matter at all, to say with the learned Doctor, *We believe Both, not doubting but that there is a Connexion of the Ideas, tho our Faculties reach not up to it.* We have nothing to do with Ideas, but as they are in our Mind; and as to these, *viz.* the Ideas we have in our own Mind (with which alone we can be concern'd) we can see, yea we cannot but see, if we attend to them, whether they are connected or not, or can be connected. If afterwards (which is the utmost can be pretended) we come to see that there is no Contradiction in the Proposition, this can be by no other way, than having *other* Ideas of the Parts of it, not by seeing a Connexion in the Ideas we now have, or by believing a Possibility of their Connexion. And this is all we desire, that we may be allowed to with-hold our Assent to their Doctrine, till we have those Ideas of the several Parts of it, which we can see to be connected, or to be capable of such Connexion. For ought I see, by the Help of the Doctor's *Salvo*, a Man may maintain any Thing. Suppose, for Instance, one should come to the Doctor, and assert that *God is the Author of Sin*, and say, I don't pretend indeed that these are express Words of Scripture, but this Doctrine is *fairly drawn out* of Scripture, *i. e.* by way of Inference from several Expressions that do necessarily imply it; even as you *draw out* your Doctrine of *Three Persons and One God*. Doth not the Scripture say that God *hardened Pharaoh's Heart*; that God *stirred up David to number the People*; that the crucifying of our Lord was *What the Hand and Counsel of God had before determined to be done*? &c. Will the Doctor tell him, that the Scripture says that God *hates Sin*, that He *hath no Pleasure in the Death of the Wicked*, that *God is not tempted of Evil, nor can tempt any Man*? He may reply, 'Tis true indeed here

View of all the infinite Variety of Things past, present and to come, together with all the Possibilities of Things, and his own infinite Perfections. I think I do very well understand my self, when I declare my Belief of *God's foreknowing future Contingences*, tho I don't pretend so much as to enter into the Thought *how* He knows before-hand what a free Agent will certainly do.

Let any intelligible Proposition be laid before us, let them produce sufficient Evidence from Scripture for the Proof of it; they shall find, we will make no difficulty of admitting it as an Article of our Belief. Were you acquainted, Sir, with the repeated Clamours of our Adversaries, and the invidious Charge (tho altogether groundless) that they bring against us upon this Head; you would own that we have too much Reason to be so express and particular as to this Matter.

But as to the Proposition now so warmly insisted on, I must confess that I have not yet been able, by all that our Friend hath said upon it in his Treatise, nor by all that I have learn'd from others, to make of it an intelligible Proposition. And till this be done, 'tis impossible it should be an Article of my Faith; unless it might be enough to receive Words without *any Sense or Meaning to them*.

§. 5. But let us enquire into the Account our Author hath now given us of the Terms he makes use of, and see what we can make of them. When he speaks of *Three Persons*, I must own that he hath given us a clear intelligible Account of them. Here, I think, he may very justly appeal to you (b) or any other Stranger, that would read the several Passages he hath refer'd to in the sacred Writings. I am entirely of his Mind, that the Scriptures do very clearly describe the Father, Son, and Spirit, as *Three distinct Agents*.

Some

is a *seeming Repugnancy*, but I believe Both, not doubting but that there is a *Connexion of Ideas*, tho our Faculties reach not up to it.

The Reader will excuse the Length of this Remark. I would hope that if this Matter were duly consider'd, it might procure for us better Quarter from our Adversaries, till such Time as they shall be able to clear their Doctrine from *appearing Contradiction*. And by that Time, I am apt to think, the Dispute will be at an End.

Some of his Brethren may perhaps think, that in this he hath gone too far. And he seems to guard against any Censure of this kind, by a Note before-hand in his *Preface*. (i)
 'Let it be ever remember'd, that both in the Title, the Preface, and throughout the whole Treatise, I take the word PERSON to signify no more than a sufficient Distinction between the sacred Three, to sustain the distinct Characters and Offices assigned to them in Scripture.' But it is enough that in this Book he plainly represents to us, what in his Judgment appears necessary to such a Distinction, and what he thinks the Scriptures do clearly ascribe to them.

Well then, let us take the plain Account he hath honestly given us of the *Three Persons*. He tells us (k) that 'The word *Person* signifies, in the common Language of Mankind, One single intelligent voluntary Agent, or a Principle of Action that has Understanding and Will. So three Men, or three Angels, are properly called three distinct Persons; and the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, who are all One God, yet having three such distinct sorts of Actions and Characters attributed to them, as may properly be ascribed to three distinct intelligent Agents, we make no scruple to call them *Three Persons*. For 'tis sufficiently evident, that three mere Names, three Attributes, three Modes or Manners of Being, three Relations, or three Sorts of Conception of one and the same single or individual Being, are not sufficient to sustain the Three different Offices, or to perform the Three different Sorts of Actions, which are attributed to *Father, Son, and Spirit*: Nor can we account for them without supposing three distinct intelligent Agents.'

Here you will allow that our Author is clear enough. There is indeed again some softning; and an Allowance to such as do not so well like to use the word *Person*; but nothing that interferes with, or disallows the Account foregoing. Upon the whole, I think we have Reason to thank him for owning the Scripture to be so clear in this Point.

It remains now that we enquire what he understands by the Term *One God*, when it is asserted again and again, that the Three Persons are *One God, One and the same God*.

He tells us in his *Preface*, (l) that he begins with the first and plainest Principle of Natural Religion. And it must be owned,

(i) P. 6.

(k) *Christ. Doctr.* p. 143.

(l) P. 13.

owned, that in his three first *Propositions* he hath discoursed of GOD in a plain intelligible Manner. He appeals to the common Usage of the Word in all Languages, Ages and Nations, wherein the Unity of God hath been professed; and to the common Meaning of it in the Lips of Jews, Heathens, and Christians. (m) Let us see then what is the Account he there gives us of the One God. He observes that God must be the *First of Beings*, &c. When he comes to his *Third Proposition* directly treating upon the Head of Unity, he tells us, *There is, and there can be but one True God, but one such God as agrees with the foregoing Description. The Light of Nature*, he says, *tells us that there can be but One, who is the First, the Wisest and the Best of Beings; there can be but One Almighty: And many of the antient Sages in the Heathen World have found out this Truth by their own Reason, and maintained it with Force of Argument.* He then produces several Passages of Scripture from the Old Testament and the New, as confirming this Truth.

I would ask any Man that had read this first Part of our Author's Treatise, whether he can form any other Notion of the One God from his Discourses upon the *Three first Propositions*, than that of One intelligent Being, and in plain words of ONE PERSON, according to the Notion that all Mankind ever had of One Person. When he says, that God is the *First of Beings, the Wisest and the Best of Beings*, that his Being doth not depend upon any arbitrary Act of his own WILL; that the Light of Nature tells us, that there can be but One WHO IS the First, the Wisest, and the Best of Beings; and the like: Doth not our Author himself necessarily understand by all this Account he hath given us of God, that God is one all-perfect Mind, one single Spirit? which is indeed agreeable to what the Scripture it self declares, viz. that God is a Spirit.

We are now to join the Two Parts of the Proposition according to the Sense that our Author himself hath given us of the Terms; and I think they do plainly amount to this, That the Father, Son and Spirit, *three distinct intelligent Agents*, are the One almighty intelligent Agent: Father, Son and Spirit, not three Modes, not three Sorts of Conception of one and the same single or individual Being [consequently

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quently themselves three real distinct Beings] (n) are One and the same individual Being, *i. e.* *Three Persons are One Person*. This he allows to be a Contradiction, and grants that *neither Reason nor Religion do require us to believe plain Inconsistencies.* (o)

He will object, perhaps, that he hath no where said that God is *One Person*. But hath he not plainly spoken of God as being *One single Person*, according to what himself allows to be the Signification of the word *Person* in the common Language of Mankind, *i. e.* *one single intelligent voluntary Agent, a Principle of Action that hath Understanding and Will?* Is not this the Sense of the Term *One God* in all Languages, Ages and Nations, where the Unity of God hath been professed; the common Meaning of it in the Lips of Jews, Heathens and Christians? Our Author, you know, appeals to these for the Signification of the word *God* (p); where the Meaning of the word *God* is known, one would think there could be no Difficulty in understanding what is meant by *One God*.

I may add here, that our Friend's Argument, whereby he would prove that there could be but *One God*, doth as manifestly conclude that there is, and can be, but one *Person* who is All-sufficient. (q) *If I were, says he, to talk like a Philosopher upon this Head, I would prove that there could be but One God, because the very Nature of God implies in it full Perfection and compleat All-sufficiency, so that he can stand in need of nothing, because he hath a Sufficiency in himself for all conceivable Purposes and Ends. If there were therefore any other God [any other Person] that other God [that other Person] would be a needless one; which would destroy the very Nature and Notion of Godhead.*

§. 6.

(n) We may conclude this to be our Author's real Sentiment, not only from this account he hath given us of the Distinction of the Persons, but also from what he hath intimated of an Inequality between the Persons. *Vid.* p. 128. *Wherein soever these Three are distinct, it may admit of some Doubt and Argument, whether they are equal or not.* He had observ'd in the very preceding Words, that *Equality is more properly found between several distinct Beings.* And is not *Inequality* also more properly found between *several distinct Beings*? If therefore he can suppose that the Three may be Unequal, he must suppose according to his own Position, that they are three several distinct Beings.

(o) P. 167.

(p) P. 22.

(q) P. 25.

§. 6. Our Author was willing to rid himself of particular Schemes and Explications, which he owns are involv'd with many and great Difficulties. I don't wonder that he was willing to excuse himself from engaging in the Defence of them. He would content himself with general Words, and so far seems to imagine himself secure, and thinks he may bid Defiance to all charge of Contradiction. (r) 'When we assert that *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are three distinct Agents in our Salvation*, such as we usually call *Persons*; and when we again assert that *the Father is God, the Son is God, the Spirit is God*, and yet that *there are not three Gods, but one God*; there is no real Contradiction in all these.' I grant it, if there be no determinate Sense to the Expressions *Three distinct Agents* and *One God*. Contradiction is a contrariety or inconsistency of Ideas; where there is no Meaning, there can be no Contradiction. But so far as we are allowed to come at their Meaning, we must beg leave to dissent from our Author; for to us these several Assertions do appear to carry in them a real Contradiction. I have never yet met with any clear determinate Sense of the several parts of this Proposition, *Father, Son, and Spirit, are three Persons and one God*, which did not evidently appear inconsistent, either with the Notion that all Mankind have ever had of *three distinct Persons* on the one hand, or else with the Notion they have always had of the *One God* on the other. Where they retain One of these, they manifestly destroy the Other. Our Author indeed, if we take either Part separately, seems to retain Both. In his Discourse upon the *three first Propositions* he speaks very intelligibly concerning the *One God*; in his Discourse upon the *13th Proposition* he speaks as intelligibly concerning *three distinct Persons*: but when we come to compare these together, you see plainly there is no consistency. In short, upon the Head of Unity he says, (s) *The Light of Nature tells us, that there can be but One who is (t) the First, the Wisest and the Best of*

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Beings;

(r) P. 166.

(s) P. 25.

(t) According to Dr. Waterland, it is Sabellianism to say, *there is but One who is God, One Person only, instead of one Nature*. Queries, p. 349. You see here our Author speaking of the Unity, doth naturally as it were, and insensibly slip into the Sabellian way of speaking. In truth it requires a great deal of Skill to speak according to the Exactness

Beings; yet the whole Design of his Book is to prove, that there are Three who are each of them the First, the Wisest, and the Best of Beings. (u)

Is it not pleasant, shall I say? or rather is it not provoking, to hear our Adversaries representing their Notions as of the utmost Importance in Religion, and telling us that *the Sense of them is evidently contain'd in Scripture; that they lie plain and open to the View of any common Reader, who has never been prepossess'd with other Notions; and that hereupon they may venture to say, God requires the Belief of them where the*

ness of Orthodoxy. And well it may, when, as the said Dr. observes (*Supplement to Arian Subscription, p. ult.*) *there are but few in comparison who do thorowly understand the Doctrine.* The more's the pity, if this Doctrine be the Fundamental of Christianity. And if it be true, which a certain Author, who wrote in Defence of this Doctrine about the middle of the last Century, begins his Book with, viz. *There is nothing in which a Christian can err with greater Danger, than this great and holy Mystery of three Persons in one Divine Essence: The Conceit either of Three Substances, or of but One Subsistence, is erroneous and damnable.* If indeed this be the Case, who would not be ready to say, Unhappy Christians to whom are committed the Oracles of God?

(u) It may seem strange that Men should not be sensible of this Inconsistency in their Notions. We may perhaps account for it in the following manner: They abstract from the Terms, when joined together in one Sentence or Proposition, some part of what they do easily and very naturally include in them, when they speak of them separately, without any Relation one to the other. When a serious Christian is speaking of God, not considering the Mystery of the Trinity, he speaks of God very intelligibly as one Infinitely perfect Spirit, according to the Notion we have of God by the Light of Nature and Scripture. In like manner, when he is speaking of the Son or Spirit, he speaks of them as distinct intelligent Agents; I may add, and commonly as distinct from God too, as well as distinct from one another, according to the known Language of Scripture. But when he comes to join these, he drops, either on the one Side the Notion or Idea he had of the Distinction of the Persons, or on the other Side the Idea he had of the One perfect Spirit: And thus by abstracting, and concealing as it were, that which is repugnant and inconsistent in the Ideas, comes to suppose (tho in a very confused Manner) an Harmony and good Agreement; at least keeps from his immediate View, at the time, the direct Repugnancy, which would appear, if he would take the *Entire Sense* that he himself affixes to those Terms, when he makes use of them at other Times and upon other Occasions.

the Bible is known and read: (w) when after all this stir about their Notions, either they refuse to tell us in what Sense they understand their own Terms; or else give us such Sense of the Terms, as they themselves can't make out to be consistent, and don't pretend to reconcile?

I fear, Sir, you will think I have been too tedious in a Matter so plainly reasonable as this is; and yet I must say, this is the main Point we insist on, and could never yet obtain. I grant, as hath been hinted before, they are sometimes clear in one part of the Doctrine, sometimes clear in the other; but what we want, is, that they would give us such Sense of the Terms, as they themselves shall own they perceive to be consistent when *joined together*, and which we may perceive to be consistent. Then we shall be ready to enquire (with all due Deference to them, yet with that Freedom and Impartiality which becomes those who are accountable to God for the right Use of his Word) what Foundation there is in Scripture for their Doctrine.

§. 7. In the mean time we must take it as they are pleased to give it us. And since we are told so frequently and with such abundant Assurance that this is the plain Doctrine of Scripture, *plain and open to the View of any common Reader*; and it is commonly suggested, that nothing but the *Pride of our Hearts*, and unreasonable *Prejudice and Obstinacy*, hinders us from embracing it: I shall beg your Patience whilst I look over the Scripture, and desire that you would go over it together with me, and see, Whether it ever speaks of God *as being Three Persons*; or on the contrary doth not always from Beginning to End, speak of God as ONE PERSON, according to the Notion that Mankind hath always had of one single Person.

It is the Doctrine of our Adversaries, that *the Godhead subsists in three Persons*; that these Three are *each of them singly God, and All together one and the same God*. We were told before that God himself hath in his Word described *his Nature as the Light of Reason would describe it*. (x) And I may say, Doth not God in his Word describe his Person too as well as his Nature (since they will make such Distinction between Nature and Person) *in the same Manner as the Light of Reason would describe it*? Read his Word, see the

the Account That gives of Him. When he speaks of himself; when he gives forth his Laws; when he is spoken of; when he is addressed to; is it not every where under the Character of *one single Person*?

To enumerate all the Particulars, would be in a manner to read every Passage in the Bible, where there is mention made of God. But there are three or four Texts, which some have been willing to take hold of as intimating a *Plurality of Persons* in God. (As to the Argument from the *Hebrew Plurals*, and particularly the Name *Elohim*, our Friend seems content to (y) give it up.) The Texts taken notice of by our Author for this Purpose are, *Gen. i. 26. God said, Let Us make Man in our Image, &c. Ch. iii. 22. The Lord God said, Behold Man is become like one of Us. Isa. vi. 8. I heard the Voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?* I will allow them, since they desire it, that here is respect to a Plurality of Persons (and not only a Mode of Speaking, which hath been sometimes used by a single Person) But what will they make of it? God says, *Let Us make Man*. Here is supposed some other Person, or Persons, concerned in this Work. Well; we grant this. But what then? Doth this imply that *God Himself* is *more Persons* than One? A Man speaking to some others in company with him, says, *Let us do this*; will it be infer'd, that the Man speaking is more Persons than One? According to this way of arguing, we might prove from our Author's Account of this Text, that there is a Plurality of Persons in the *Father*; for according to him it is *God the Father who speaks thus, consulting as it were with the Son and Spirit*.

But I suppose the Stress of the Argument lies in this, that here is a Plurality of Persons introduced as *concurring* in the Creation of Man. God says, *Let Us make Man in our Image, after our Likeness*. And afterwards it is said, *so God created Man in his own Image, in the Image of God created He him*. Some of the *Jewish Writers*, it's said, have a Story about *Moses's* being offended at this Passage, when it was dictated to him by God. (z) If this might create any Difficulty to the *Jews*, I think we may easily account for it, who have been expressly told in our sacred Writings of *Another Person* who was *with God*, and was employ'd in this Work. We read that *God made all things by Jesus Christ*; that

(y) P. 133.

(z) V. Patrick in loc.

that *by him God made the Worlds*. And what do they gain by this? God says to his Son and to his Spirit (as some ancient Writers, together with our Author, do understand it;) *Let Us*, &c. therefore GOD who speaks here to two other Persons *is these Two other Persons*; or, These two other Persons to whom God speaks *are the God* who speaks. For this is the Point they are to prove from this and the like Passages, *viz.* that *God is these Persons*, or doth contain in himself these Persons; or that the Plurality of Persons here supposed *is the God or the Lord* spoken of in those Texts. Those who suppose that God is introduced here as speaking to his Son, will easily perceive the Expressions *Our Image* and *our Likeness* to be very proper in the Case; for the Son being himself the *express Image* of the Father, Man being made in the Image of God must be made also in the Image of the Son. And when we are assur'd that *God made the Worlds by his Son*, who questions but that it is justly said, *God made Man in his own Image*?

I suppose I need not consider particularly the two other Texts refer'd to by our Author, as intimating a Plurality of Persons in God. If they cannot make out their Point from this first mentioned, I dare say they will be no more able to make it appear from either of the other. I could wish that those who lay a great Stress upon such Evidences as these for Proof of the Doctrine of the Trinity (as our (a) Author tells you some Divines have done) would remember what it is they are to make out from such Texts. It is not, merely, that there are *more Persons* spoken of; this we will not contend about. The Thing they are to prove, if they would say any thing to the Purpose, is, that *the Lord God Himself is the several Persons* spoken of, or hinted at, in those Passages. If they can make this appear, we will own it deserves to be consider'd.

I am apt to think, Sir, that this whole Matter and all our Discourse about it, must seem to you very odd and uncouth. It is, I believe, what would never have come into your Head upon a bare reading the Bible. But such is the Way of Thinking and Speaking that hath for some time obtained among us. What Foundation there is for it in such Passages of Scripture I leave you to judge.

And

(a) P. 133.

And if these three or four Places of Scripture, where they imagine that God is represented as being *More Persons than One*, appear so little to their Purpose; what will you think of the Matter, when you shall observe that the whole Bible every where else, from Beginning to End, represents God absolutely as *one single Person*? Would the kind and faithful God (to argue now as our Author frequently doth) in a Book which was given to Men on purpose to make Himself known to them, frame the whole Strain of that Revelation in such Manner, as must, one would think, necessarily lead them to conceive of Him as One individual intelligent Agent, *i. e. one single Person*; if he were really *Three Persons*; and if the Knowledge of this were of so great Importance in our Religion? Strange! that he should give Laws, require the Worship and Obedience of his People, direct them in their Addresses to him; and all this while, not only leave them in utter Ignorance of this great Point, but lead them into so *dangerous an Error* as to entertain wrong Notions and Conceptions of him!

God gave a Law to the People of *Israel*. Read that solemn and awful Manifestation of God, and the Words he spoke to them. *I am the Lord thy God*—— *Thou shalt have no other Gods before Me*, &c. Read the Addresses of the holy Men of old recorded in Scripture. Is it not *One Person* speaks, *One Person* demands their Service and Obedience, and accordingly *One Person* they address to? Or, must we confound all Language, and say, that I, THOU, ME, THEE, in a Succession of Writings for so many Ages, mean, not one single Person, but a *Plurality of Persons*? And when we hear, for Instance, God in so solemn a Manner saying to the People, *I AM the Lord thy God*—— *Thou shalt have no other Gods before ME*; must we understand it, *WE THREE are the Lord thy God*—— *Thou shalt have no other Gods before US THREE*?

At least might we not have expected some Intimation of This; when God declares himself to be ONE; that we might understand in what Sense he is One? One in *Nature*, not in *Person*, as our Divines speak; not so one as to exclude a Plurality of Persons. But, behold the same, Incaution may I call it? yea the same Tendency to lead them into this *Dangerous Error*. Hear, O *Israel*, *the Lord our God is one Lord*: or rather, as seems more agreeable to the Order of the Words in the Original, *the Lord our God, the Lord, is One*. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God— And thou shalt fear

feare the Lord thy God and serve HIM, and swear by HIS Name—— To thee it was shewed, that thou mightest know that the Lord he is God, there is none else besides HIM. So frequently in *Isaiah*, I AM God, and there is none besides ME. Must not these Gentlemen own, that upon their Hypothesis it would have been much more proper to have said, WE are God, and there is none besides US?

But perhaps this was to be reserved to the Times of the Gospel, when an Acquaintance with the Blessed Trinity was to become a necessary Part of our Religion. (b) An Acquaintance with the Blessed Trinity, is indeed become a necessary part of our Religion. But if the Gospel were designed to acquaint us with This as a necessary Part of our Religion, that Three Persons are the One God; one would expect to find the Stile of the New Testament quite alter'd, as to this Point, from the Stile of the Old. But do we find any Difference in this (c) Respect? Let it be produced. I might mention the several Passages in the Gospel where our Lord himself speaks of God, or speaks to God. Or if that be thought too early for the clear Discovery of this Mystery; How do the Apostles speak of God? You have read their Writings; do you find that they ever speak of God otherwise than as the Law and the Prophets, or than as our Lord did when he was on Earth, I mean as to this Point we are now considering? Let them shew any one Instance in their Writings, where GOD is spoken of as being a Plurality of Persons; or where he is not spoken of as being One single Person.

I think enough hath been said upon this Head. As to the Fact, I persuade my self you are fully satisfy'd; and I doubt not but you will think it of some Weight in the Matter now before us. We have seen that our Author himself,
D when

(b) P. 4.

(c) Unless it be that the *Hebrew Plurals*, which some have laid so great Stress upon in this Controversy, (see particularly a late Pamphlet, *The Trinity of the Bible*) are all changed into perfect *Singulars*; by which means the *Three Almighty's*, comprehended in the Name *Elohim*, are entirely dropt in the New Testament. Whatever other Advantages we may have for a clearer Proof of this Doctrine from the New Testament, it is certain, this grammatical Evidence is quite lost there: I suppose through the unhappy Genius of the *Greek Language*. What pity is it that the New Testament was not wrote in *Hebrew* as well as the Old?

when he speaks of *God*, and particularly when he speaks of God's being *One*, speaks of him entirely as one intelligent Agent, as *one single Person*. We have found this perfectly agreeable to the Manner of *God's* speaking of himself, of all the *Prophets* and holy Men of old, of *Christ* and his *Apostles*: Not one Instance to the contrary. You will think there is need of very plain and direct Proof to persuade us after all, that *God is three Persons*. They themselves are sensible of this, therefore you find our Friend talking so frequently of *overbearing Light, resistless Proofs, &c.* Truly they need such to bear down so strong Presumption to the contrary.

§. 8. But before I enter upon the Consideration of his scriptural Proofs, I must beg leave to take notice of Two *Moral Arguments* which he hath thought fit to bring in by the way; the One, as a more direct Confirmation of the Truth it self; the Other as an Evidence of the Plainness of the Revelation concerning it, and manifesting that this must be the genuine Sense of the Sacred Writings. I chuse to take notice of them now, that we may with the more Freedom and Impartiality judge of the Proofs themselves which he hath produced from Scripture.

If you please, Sir, I will recite the whole Argument in our Author's own Words, that we may not be thought to conceal any part of the Force of it. It runs thus (p. 125.)

- ' The greatest Number of Christians since the Days of the
- ' Apostles, the most religious, the most holy of Men, and
- ' Multitudes of glorious Confessors and Martyrs, have be-
- ' lieved this Doctrine of the *Divinity of the Son and Spirit*,
- ' and under the influence of this Belief have paid divine
- ' Honours to them both: And this many of them have done
- ' with such concurring Circumstances, that carry in them a
- ' good Force of Argument (*viz.*) they have worshipped
- ' them as God. (1.) After they have sought the Know-
- ' ledge of the Truth, with utmost Diligence and Prayer.
- ' (2.) When they have been in the holiest and most heaven-
- ' ly Frames of Spirit, and in their devoutest Hours.
- ' (3.) When they have been under the most sensible Im-
- ' pressions of the Love of the Father, and the Son, and un-
- ' der the most quickning Influences of the Blessed Spirit him-
- ' self. (4.) In the Devotions of a Death-Bed, and in the
- ' Songs and Doxologies of Martyrdom.

' Now can we suppose, that in such devout and glorious
' Seasons as these are, *God the Father* should ever thus ma-
nifest

‘ nifest his own Love to Souls, that are degrading him by
 ‘ worshipping another God? That *Christ Jesus* should reveal
 ‘ himself in his dying Love to Souls, that are practising Ido-
 ‘ latry, and worshipping himself instead of the true God?
 ‘ Or can we believe that the *blessed Spirit* should give his In-
 ‘ fluence and his Consolations to encourage and assist such
 ‘ false Worship, and himself assume these divine Honours,
 ‘ if he had no Title to Godhead? Or can we imagine that
 ‘ the True and Gracious God should suffer such Multitudes
 ‘ of holy Souls to be deluded and given up, to believe a
 ‘ Lye, in such an awful and important Point, in their most
 ‘ devout Moments and in their dying Hour?’

You will easily believe that such a moving Representation
 as this must make a great Impression upon devout honest
 Christians; especially when they are already possess’d with a
 firm Persuasion of the Truth of the Doctrine. Perhaps it
 might strike you at first hearing, and may seem to carry in
 it, as our Author expresses it, *a good Force of Argument*,
 while you take the Case to be as he hath represented it. But
 I must observe to you, that our Friend here takes for grant-
 ed what we are very well assured is not true in Fact. He
 himself knows too well that the former Part of his Position,
viz. That the greatest Number of Christians since the days of
the Apostles have believed this Doctrine of the Divinity of the
Son and Spirit, (I mean *his* Doctrine of the Divinity of
 these Two Persons) is what we do not allow. We think we
 can sufficiently prove the contrary. Our Adversaries have
 been often challeng’d to produce any clear Testimony from
 the Catholick Writers of the Three first Centuries, declar-
 ing this to be the Doctrine of Christianity, that the *Three*
Persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, are the One God. What
 doth it avail to produce some Expressions concerning the
Divinity of the Son or of the Spirit (if any such may be
 found concerning the latter) if it doth not appear that they
 understand *Divinity* in the same Manner as our Author does,
i. e. so as to make these together with the Father, the *One*
and the same God?

I don’t wonder that they would be glad to have the an-
 tient Doctors of the Christian Church on their Side. You
 can’t but think they must find it very hard to persuade Men,
 that this Doctrine of *three Persons and one God*, is the great
 Fundamental of Christianity, if they perceiv’d that the
 Christian Church for three hundred Years together from the
 Time of the Apostles, knew nothing of it. Yet many of

their own Side, such as have been most conversant in the Writings of the Primitive Christians, have been forced in a manner to acknowledge as (d) much; the others, seeing how great a Prejudice this would be to their Cause, have contended with all their might to make the *Fathers*, as they are called among us Christians, speak according to their Sentiments. But in what manner is it that they produce the *Fathers* as Witnesses to their Doctrine? Is it by any express Testimonies asserting the *Three Persons* to be the *One God*, and professing this to be the Doctrine of Christianity? Nothing like it. On the contrary our Adversaries themselves cannot deny, but that these Primitive Writers do for the most part, when they speak of the *One God*, manifestly mean the *Father*; and (which deserves your particular Remark) that in all their *Credo's* or *Confessions of Faith* this Title of the *One God* is solely apply'd to Him; and Christ is spoken of as the *Son of this One God*. Thus it runs in all their *Credo's*, even down to that of *Nice*, which they generally boast of as establishing their Doctrine. You will ask, How is it then that they produce those antient Writers as Vouchers for their Doctrine? In short, in the same Way and Manner as they produce the Scriptures; not shewing us where these Writers themselves declare this to be the Christian Doctrine; but proving it to be their Sense by Inferences and certain *Glosses* and *Comments* upon their Words; (e) of which you may judge, by what you have seen of the manner of proving this Doctrine from the Sacred Writings.

Our Adversaries are sensible of a great Deficiency of direct Proofs of the Divinity of the *Holy Ghost*. It is pleasant enough to see how gently sometimes they pass this over. When our Friend comes to this Part of his Doctrine, *I shall be much briefer*, says he, *in this Part of my Discourse*, not only because the Scripture hath not Occasion to give half so many Proofs of the Godhead of the *Holy Spirit*; but because if the true and proper Godhead of Christ be fully proved, that of the *Holy Spirit* will be easily (f) admitted. 'Tis true indeed, as to the Difficulty of the Hypothesis it self, we can as easily admit

(d) *Vid.* Append. to Emlyn's Remarks upon the Four London Ministers. — and Append. to Whiston's Reply to the Earl of Nottingham.

(e) *Vid.* Reply to Dr. Waterland's Defence, &c.

(f) P. 85.

admit *three* distinct Persons to be the One supreme God, as admit *two*. And if this will do them any Service, we will freely own, that we can as easily *in this respect* admit three Hundred. But what is this to the purpose, when we are enquiring about the real Fact? If the Apostles did teach this Doctrine of the *three Persons being the One God*, and this contains in it, and carries with it, as our Friend says, *the Substance and Glory of the (g) Gospel*; if the Primitive Christians did receive it as such from the Apostles, there would certainly be as much Occasion for taking notice of the *third Person* in the Godhead, as of the *Second*. At least, you would think it highly requisite that they should give some general Notice, that He was equally to be included. But when we find an utter Silence upon this Head; when they do not so much as give him upon any Occasion the Title of *God*, nor teach Christians to conceive of him, or apply to him, under that Character; we cannot help thinking that they were utter Strangers to the Notion of *three Persons being One and the same God*; so far from esteeming this Doctrine the *Substance and Glory of the Gospel*. If on the other hand it can be made appear, that some of them did actually exclude the *third Person* from such *Communion*, as our Friend speaks of, *in the one Godhead*; then must he give up at least some of the *Three first*, which we may justly reckon the best, Ages of Christianity.

But this is not our present Business. Only, Sir, you will take notice of this, that we do not allow him to take into his great *Number of Christians, Confessors, and Martyrs that have believed the Divinity of the Son and Spirit*, (i. e. according to his Doctrine of their Divinity) I say, we do not allow him to take in the glorious Confessors and Martyrs of the *Three first Ages*, from the Apostles; nor will it be granted, that they paid to the Son and Spirit *divine Honours*, i. e. worshipped these Persons *as the One supreme God*. If indeed our Friend will allow, as in p. 202. that *while the Son and Spirit are made the glorious Mediums of our Worship which is addrest to the Father, they receive Honours from us which may be justly called Divine*; we do grant, that in this respect and in this Sense the Antient Church paid Divine Honours to them both. But this will not do for his Purpose. The worshipping God through them as *Mediums*,
will,

will, I believe, in the Apprehension of all Mankind, be esteemed a very different Thing from the worshipping them as GOD.

And now, Sir, as we are persuaded that we have the *Glorious Confessors and Martyrs of the First Ages*, the purest Ages of Christianity, on our Side; you may think, perhaps, that we might retort our Friend's Argument, and that it might sound as well in our Mouths as theirs. But it must be own'd, our Adversaries have in this sort of Arguing a great Advantage above us. They can roundly tell us, that it's certain, none of those glorious Martyrs and Confessors *could* be of our Mind; that this were a Contradiction, for those who deny the supreme Deity of Christ, *deny the Lord that bought them*; (h) that a *false Faith cannot be productive of a good and holy Life, either in the Nature of the Thing, or by the Operation of God owning and accompanying of it.* (i) In short, there can be no such thing in their Opinion, as true Piety and Holiness, where there is not the Belief of their Doctrine. (k) With some of them this is all Demonstration: Thus will they cut us short at once, if we should pretend to argue from the Piety and Holiness of Any that have been of our Persuasion. If the Persons are acknowledged to have been good Christians, Confessors and Martyrs, this it self is with them a Proof that they *could* not be of our Mind. If it be too plain to be deny'd, that they have been of our Mind; then they could not be good Christians. All the Appearances of Goodness, and even Martyrdom it self, were from a corrupt Principle, from a *false Faith*, and therefore could not be pleasing to God.

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(h) *Four London Ministers*, p. 117.

(i) *Ib.* p. 47.

(k) Mr. W. doth not directly say this; but his Argument is plainly built upon this Supposition: For if it be an Argument that they who have believed the Doctrine of the Trinity, are in the right, because God hath manifested his Love unto them; he must suppose that God will never manifest his Love to them who are of the contrary Opinion: otherwise, this might prove them to be in the right too. Unless he will say, that the *Trinitarian* Opinion, if that should be an Error, is inconsistent with the Manifestation of the Love of God; but that the *Arian* Opinion, tho it be an Error, is not so. Which would be an Acknowledgment, that the *Trinitarians*, if they should prove to be mistaken, are in a much more dangerous Condition, than the *Arians* are, if they are mistaken.

We dare not imitate them in these their bold and rash Censures. For my part, I can easily believe that many of those who have believed this Doctrine (as far as any can be supposed to receive and believe an unintelligible Proposition) have been devout Worshippers of God, and were accepted of him, and might have the *comfortable Sense of his Love in their dying Hours.*

But, says our Friend, *What! can we suppose that God the Father should ever thus manifest his Love to Souls that are degrading him by worshipping another God; that Christ Jesus should reveal himself in his dying Love to Souls that are practising Idolatry, &c.?* One would wonder sometimes to see how the Men of this Persuasion are studying Arguments to condemn themselves, and labouring as it were to take off all Excuse, and to represent their Case as desperate, if so be they should prove at last to be mistaken. This is frequently to be met with in their Writings. They had need be very well assur'd, that they are in the Right; for it is no uncommon thing with them to pass Sentence upon themselves, if it should be found otherwise; and to represent it, as if there could be no room for Mercy, and that they neither expected it nor desired it. If they should indeed be condemned as *degrading the Father by worshipping another God, as practising Idolatry by worshipping Christ instead of the true God;* it might be justly said, *Out of your own Mouths you are condemned,* 'tis the Sentence you have passed upon yourselves. But the Mercies of God are not limited, nor his Judgments directed and influenced by the Weakness and rash Censures of Men; no not by the Censures that they through Mistake, in the Heat of their Zeal, may have passed upon themselves.

They talk indeed of a threefold inexplicable Distinction in God; but, as we have seen by our Author's own Account in the Beginning of his Book, they still entertain that Notion of the Divine Being which they have learnt both from the Light of Nature and Scripture; and do from a sincere Heart give unto him the Glory that is due unto his Name; acknowledging his infinite Perfections, &c. and that there is *None other besides him.* When they worship Christ as the supreme God, do they pay their Regard to *another God*, to another *besides him* whom they own to be the true God? No surely; but as they themselves confess, according to their own Doctrine, they still worship the *same one God.* It will be said however, *Still they worship him as the true God,*
who

who is not so; and thus are guilty of Idolatry. But what do they mean, when they say that Christ is the true God? do they suppose the Man Christ Jesus, the Human Nature, to be the Deity? No, as far as I find, when they explain themselves, they pretend to no more than this, that the *Deity*, the proper Object of their Worship, is in some special incomprehensible manner related to, and united with, the Man Christ Jesus, which they call a *Personal Union*; under this Consideration they pay Adoration to him, maintaining always that the *Divine Nature* is the Object of their Adoration; which Divine Nature they say is the same in the Father and in the Son. Our Author more than once takes notice of this; particularly when he is treating of the *divine Honours due to each of the sacred Three*, Let it always be observed and kept in Mind, that the only *Ground* and *Foundation*, and formal Reason of the Divine Worship and Honours, that are paid to each of the sacred Three, is their *Godhead*, or *Communion in the Divine Nature*. (1)

I hope they will not take it amiss, that we plead on their Behalf, and endeavour to excuse them. In short, whatever confused Notions they may have, and inconsistent Ideas about *Distinction of Persons* and *Unity of Nature*, while they truly fear God, love him and subject their Souls to him in opposition to every Rival, and adore him as the Fountain of all Good; you may see abundant reason from Scripture to believe, that the Father of Mercies will not reject them upon account of the Darkness and Confusion of their Minds, about Notions which they have been taught to look upon as sacred Truths, and have thought themselves obliged earnestly to contend for, out of Zeal for his Honour and Glory. (It is well for us that *God's Thoughts are not as our Thoughts, nor his Ways as our Ways*.) And whereas confused Notions about these Matters are plainly no ways inconsistent with a sincere Love of God, the *blessed Spirit* may, I hope, without giving Countenance to their Notions or justifying their Schemes, give them Consolation. Shall we make the blessed Spirit answerable for all the wild Mistakes of those with whom in his great Goodness he is pleas'd to dwell? God forbid.

I hope what has been said may satisfy you that it is not so *unsupposable* a Thing as our Author would represent it, that

(1) P. 190.

that God the Father should manifest his Love, &c. to Souls while they profess to worship the Son and Spirit as the true God, tho they should be mistaken in their Notion: And consequently we may allow the Fact to be true concerning many who have received this Doctrine, and yet not allow this to be a Proof of their having been in the Right. I may be fully persuaded in my own Mind that they had no Foundation in Scripture for their Belief; yet make no difficulty of believing, that while they adore the one True God, the Confusion in their Thoughts, apprehending the One God under this or that unintelligible Distinction, shall not prevent their Acceptance with Him who ever loveth the Righteous, and whose Countenance doth behold the Upright.

In truth, if I were to judge by what they generally teach about the Worshipping the Three Persons, I should be inclined to think, that their Fault lies in not worshipping Christ at all with the Worship that is due to him, rather than in an Idolatrous Worship of another God, or worshipping him instead of the true God. Tho with respect to this also it may be observed, that their general Practice is very different from what one would expect from the Account they give of their Principles. They do in reality worship him to the Glory of the Father, while in their Discourses they maintain that all the Worship that is paid to him is upon the account of his being One with the Father; which therefore in consequence should be the self-same Worship that is given to the Father.

§. 9. We shall now proceed to the other *Moral Argument*, which in the Judgment of our Author will confirm both the *Doctrine of the Deity of the Son and Spirit, and of their distinct Personality together.* It is this: (m)

‘ This great Article of Belief, That *Father, Son, and Spirit are three Persons, and yet one God*, is so sublime in its Nature, so impossible to be found out by human Reason, if it had not been reveal’d; it carries in it such an Appearance of Contradiction at first, ’tis so exceeding hard to explain and reconcile, even when ’tis well considered by us; and ’tis so shocking and offensive in the most usual Explications of it, to the great Pretenders to Reason, that it can hardly be suppos’d how it should enter into the Minds of Men at first, and how it should have been so generally
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‘ believed in the Christian Church in almost all Ages of
 ‘ Christianity, if it had not been very plainly reveal’d, and
 ‘ strongly confirm’d in Scripture; so that those honest
 ‘ and conscientious Men could not wink against the Light
 ‘ and Strength of Evidence, nor turn the Scripture to any
 ‘ other Sense.

‘ It is not to be imagin’d that such a *Doctrine of the*
 ‘ *Trinity*, which has no Countenance from the Light of Na-
 ‘ ture, nor any manner of Allurement in it to gratify the
 ‘ Lusts or Fancies of Men, or flatter the Pride of human
 ‘ Reason, should ever have come, without most forcible E-
 ‘ vidence, into the Heads of such Multitudes of great and
 ‘ wise Men, who thought and search’d with Freedom for
 ‘ themselves, and who read the Bible with an honest Inqui-
 ‘ ry after Truth: I say, it is not to be imagin’d that such a
 ‘ strange Article should ever have been believed by these
 ‘ Men, and brought into the Church, or subsisted there so
 ‘ many hundred Years, and especially since the *Reformation*,
 ‘ were it not for the plain, strong, overbearing Light,
 ‘ and resistless Proofs of it that are found in the Word of
 ‘ God.

Here you may observe again, our Friend brings in his
Multitudes concurring in the Belief of this Doctrine. But
 it is somewhat remarkable that he speaks more dubiously,
 than those of his Party generally do, of the universal Con-
 sent and Harmony of the Christian Church in all Ages. Our
 Author is more cautious, he speaks of its being generally be-
 liev’d in *almost* all Ages of Christianity. I suppose he in-
 tended to except the Time when the whole World, as it’s
 said, was become *Arian*. I am very well satisfy’d that he
 may except also the Three first Ages. And if these are Part
 of the *Exception*, this alone would be an unanswerable Ar-
 gument in my Apprehension, against admitting it as the fun-
 damental Doctrine of Christianity; nothing but the most
 express Declarations of Scripture could induce me to believe
 it to be so, upon that Supposition.

But to let that pass. It might deserve to be consider’d,
 what Harmony or Consent there hath been in the Faith con-
 cerning this Article since the Time that it hath been the ge-
 neral Profession to believe *three Persons and one God*. Our
 Author acknowledges that the particular *Explications of this*
Doctrine have been various, (n) and he would excuse him-
 self

(n) *Note*, p. 148.

self from meddling with any of them, as having no concern with them. (o)

But we cannot so easily allow him to rid himself of these *Incumbrances*, as he calls them. If he thinks that there is no need of any *Explication*, and that 'tis enough they have *believed the general Doctrine it self*; (p) he must give me leave to tell him that this will not do, at least not as to the *Argument* we have now in hand. I don't say but that our Author hath done prudently in contenting himself with the general *Expressions of Three Persons and One God*, without perplexing and embarrassing the *Minds of his Readers with any of those various Mazes of Scheme and Hypothesis*, which *Men of Learning have invented to explain and defend this sacred Article of Christian Faith*. (q) Yet I hope we may be allow'd to suppose, that those who have thought fit to give their *Explications*, did believe the *Doctrine* according to their own *Explications*; that they took it in the *Sense* which they themselves have given of it. (r) And I may appeal to our Author himself, whether the *Explications* that several have given are consistent with his *Sense* of the *Article*, even his own *general Sense* of it. As for instance, whether the *Explication* that some have given of the *three Persons*, hath not plainly amounted to no more than three *Modes*, or three *Relations*? And if so, how they can be reckoned to agree with him, who hath so expressly declar'd that the *Scripture Account of the three Persons cannot mean only three Modes or Manners of Being, three Relations, &c.* that it must necessarily intend no less than *three distinct intelligent Agents*? I query now, whether these shall be taken in among the *Believers* of this great *Article of Three Persons and one God*? Where is the *Agreement*, unless it be in using the same *Words*, while their *Notions*, their *Ideas* are as wide, as distant one from another, as a *Mode of Being*, and an *intelligent Agent*; as *One real Person* under three *Modes* or *Manners of Being*, and *Three real Persons*? that is in truth,

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(o) P. 5. (p) P. 154. (q) P. 5.

(r) See some Account of the various Schemes and Explications in *Beuner's Irenicum*, p. 76, &c. and let the Reader collect if he can what was the *Substance* of the *Doctrine* in which they agreed. As to many, I fear he will perceive nothing but an *Harmony of Sounds* in maintaining the *general Doctrine*; while, as far as we can enter into their *Sense*, there appears as much *Disagreement* between *One* and *Another*, as there is between the *Orthodox* and *Arians*.

as distant as a *Trinity* and *no Trinity*. This is no more than hath been owned by some of their own Party: 'All the Wit of Man, says one of them, cannot find a *Medium* between a substantial *Trinity* and a *Trinity* of Names, or a *Trinity* of mere Modes, Respects and Relations in the same single *Essence*, which is *no Trinity at all*.' This Observation was approved of by a learned Writer upon this Subject, for whom our Author had a great Veneration; (s) who himself also declar'd, that he apprehended such as these, rather to fall in with the *Unitarians*, and to agree with them in Sense, tho they had the Name of *Trinitarians*.

Again, our Author tells us (p. 155.) that some have asserted *One Substance, one conscious Mind, inconceivably and necessarily distinguish'd into three Personal Agents*. Doth he reckon These with their *one Substance, one conscious Mind*, (whatever they may say of *Personal Agents*) to believe what he believes of the *Three Persons*? Others; he says, have supposed *Three distinct Substances or Minds, and yet all intimately and essentially and necessarily united in One Godhead*. Do These with their *three Substances* in an inconceivable Union one with another, understand by *One God* the same as the former, who assert, *one Substance, one conscious Mind*? or rather, must not those former look upon these as holding *three Gods* (according to their Notion of *God* as an all-perfect Spirit) however they may be united together? Where is then the Agreement of these *Multitudes of great and wise Men* in almost all Ages of Christianity in receiving this great Article of Belief? In these later Ages there hath been indeed a general Reception of a certain *Form of Words*; but when there have been such various and contradictory Senses put upon them, by those who have made use of them, with what Face can they who know these Things, pretend that these have all agreed in receiving the *orthodox Doctrine*, and make this an Argument against us; to say nothing of the Bulk of ordinary Christians, whose Sense of such a nice intricate Doctrine, as this is confessed to be, I know not how we shall be able to come at? Or rather, may we not suppose, that since the Men of Learning have made so sublime a Doctrine of it, so exceeding hard to explain, &c. the plain honest

(s) Mr. How, whom Mr. W. hath justly celebrated in one of his Poems. See Mr. How's Letter concerning a Postscript, p. 54. *Calm Discourse*, &c. p. 105, 133.

honest Christians had no Notion at all of it, and understood nothing by it, however they might orthodoxly adhere to the Words and Phrases that were prescribed to them.

But let us suppose, with our Author, that these have all in Truth and Reality received this great Article. Why then, says our Friend, How is it to be imagin'd this should ever have come to pass, if the Doctrine had not been *plainly reveal'd and strongly confirm'd in Scripture*? I suppose, Sir, that one who knows the World as you do, must have met with many strange Notions that would appear *shocking to Reason*. Some such Doctrines you may have seen perhaps maintain'd with great Zeal, and held as main Principles of Religion; possibly too you may have wonder'd how such Things should enter into the Minds of Men at first; but I believe you scarce ever thought that to be a convincing Proof of their coming from Heaven. There is Evidence enough that Men are of themselves capable of introducing such kind of Doctrines into the World. I should think there was no need of recurring to Divine Revelation, to account for the Absurdities of human Schemes. I suppose you have heard before now of the Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*, an essential Point of Religion in the *Romish Church*; a Doctrine as *shocking to Reason*, as big with glaring *Appearances of Contradiction*, as any that can well be thought of. This, they tell us, hath been generally believ'd in the *Christian Church in almost all Ages*. For many Ages it hath been received among them, and earnestly contended for. Suppose now some learned Defender of the *Romish Faith* should plead in behalf of this Doctrine, 'It is not to be imagin'd that such a strange Article should ever have been brought into the Church, and have subsisted there so many hundred Years; especially since the pretended Reformation, when many with all their Wit and Learning endeavour'd to expose it to contempt and ridicule; were it not for the plain, strong, overbearing Light, and resistsless Proofs of it that are found in the Word of God; we having the express Words of Christ for it, *This is my Body*.' What think you, must we yield to this convincing Argument? Why doth not our Author submit to it?

It's likely he will say, there is a manifest Difference in these two Cases. As to that absurd Doctrine of the *Romanists*, it is visible how the Priests Power and Dignity is advanced by it: In the other, which he contends for, *there is not any manner of Allurement to gratify the Lusts and Fancies* of

of Men; their Doctrine is impos'd upon Men by the mere dint of Authority, and maintain'd by the dread of Punishment if any should pretend to call it in question: As to this, *great and wise Men who thought and searcht with Freedom for themselves, and who read the Bible with an honest Inquiry after Truth*, have embrac'd it, have thought themselves oblig'd to maintain it and defend it. As to the *latter* Consideration, I fear that the Difference will not be found so great as some would willingly have it thought to be. This Doctrine of the Trinity hath for several Ages been represented as a main distinguishing Doctrine of Christianity, and no one seem'd to have any scruple about it. The Prejudice for it had long taken Root. Our pious Reformers came out of the Church of Rome fully possess'd with it; and to prevent any *Odium* and Clamour that their Adversaries might have rais'd against them upon this Head, seem'd willing to shew as much Zeal for it as their Adversaries themselves could, and as freely denounced their Anathema's against all Opposers. We see to this day how dangerous it is for any to open his Mouth against it. Besides all the Consequences of lying under the popular *Odium*, we have Laws yet in being with very severe Penalties to be inflict'd upon any that should openly deny it. And we see plainly enough, how agreeable it would be to some of the zealous Defenders of this Doctrine to have such Laws put in Execution. Some that are themselves beholden to a Toleration, cannot bear a Toleration here. I believe by this time you are ready to think, that our Author hath no great reason to boast of the *Freedom of Thought*, and *honest Inquiry after Truth* in the embracing and upholding this Doctrine. There is no such great Difference in the *Means* that have been thought proper for the maintaining and securing the Profession of this Doctrine, and those which have been used for the support of Transubstantiation and other absurd Tenets among the *Romanists*; (t) whatever difference there may be as to the Occasion of its Rise.

Our Friend supposes, that as it hath *no Countenance from the Light of Nature*, so there could be *no manner of Allurement in it to gratify the Lusts and Fancies of Men*, and consequently that it could have no other rise but the *strong and overbearing Light* that it is attended with in the Word of God.

(t) *Vid. Emlyn's Remarks upon the Four London Ministers*, p. 7.

God. It is not very material to trace the Rise and Progress of this Doctrine. Opinions, especially such as seem strange and shocking, seldom make their way into the World all at once. 'Tis by gradual Steps that any are at first led into such Notions, and by degrees they spread and take root. And if we observe Mankind, we shall find no such great Aversion to mysterious Doctrines, as our Author seems to apprehend; but rather a strong Propensity towards them, and Veneration for them, as the more sacred for being incomprehensible. And it is not difficult to imagine, how cunning designing Men may find their Account in keeping up such a Veneration and Zeal for mysterious incomprehensible Doctrines, of which they are to be the Dispensers and Expounders. But it may not be convenient to say any thing farther upon this Head. Not that I would have it suppos'd, that all who shew a Zeal for such Doctrines are engaged by such Allurements. Far be it from me. I have not the least suspicion that our Friend here in particular hath any such Views in his Defence of it; I only observe that there may be Allurements of this Nature, that may forward the Propagation of such Doctrines. But to proceed:

I could instance, it may be, in other Doctrines, that might have as good claim to a Freedom from all *Allurements to the Lusts and Fancies of Men*; which yet have enter'd into Men's Heads, and been earnestly contended for, tho they have carried in them an *Appearance of Contradiction* to all the Notions we have of the Holiness, and Justice, and Goodness of God, both by the Light of Nature and Scripture. I am apt to think, you would not presently conclude, according to our Author's way of reasoning, that upon this very Account they must necessarily be revealed from Heaven. I wish the World had been so happy as to make this reasoning of our Author more convincing. But as matters are, and have been in the World, we see enough, and more than enough, to persuade us that it is no such incredible thing, that Men should produce of their own Heads strange Notions that have *no Countenance from the Light of Nature*.

This Argument puts me in mind of a noted saying of an antient Doctor of the Church, *Credo quia impossibile est; I believe it, because 'tis impossible*. Some have excused it as a Sally of the good Man's Zeal; but I don't remember to have met with any that have admir'd his Wisdom, or commended his Judgment for it.

But

But so much for the two *Moral Arguments*. I hope, Sir, I may be allow'd to suppose, that neither of them, how pompously soever set forth by the ingenious Author, have appeared to you sufficient to determine the matter against us. And I persuade my self, that notwithstanding all that hath been suggested in these Arguments to prejudice you in favour of his Notion, you are still free to hear what we have to say to the Proofs he hath produced from Scripture, which he thinks so plain, so convincing, and of *resistless* Force.

§. 10. Before we enter upon a particular Examination of the Arguments, let us consider in the general what Sort of Proofs they are, which our Friend makes such Boasts of. Are there any *express Declarations* of Scripture? Doth he shew us where *Christ*, or his *Apostles* have insisted on this Doctrine, and represented it as the Foundation of the Gospel? or indeed hath he produced one single Passage out of the New Testament, where it is so much as mentioned? This indeed we should allow to be an Argument of *resistless* Force. We should then have received the Doctrine with due Veneration, and with utmost Submission; firmly believing it to be a true Proposition, however we might have been puzzled in fixing the just and proper Sense of it. But alas! we meet with nothing like this. They don't pretend that Scripture says this, that *Father, Son, and Spirit, are the One God*; 'tis what they say is the *Sense* of Scripture, 'tis what they *draw out* of it by Inferences, Glosses and Comments, &c.

It is generally own'd that this great Doctrine was but obscurely revealed to the Saints under the *Old Testament*: yet you will find that a very considerable part of their Proofs are drawn from thence; and that those which they draw from the *New*, do for the most part borrow all their Strength from the *Old*. This I may have farther Occasion to take notice of hereafter.

But now, Sir, let me ask you, where would you expect to find the most clear Proofs of this great fundamental Doctrine of Christianity? Would you not expect to meet with it in the Preaching of the Apostles, and in their Writings? Nay, would you not expect to find it there in the most express Terms, and frequently inculcated, as all the other great Points of Christian Doctrine are owned to be?

Let

Let us take the account this Author himself hath given us of this great Article of Belief. *An Article so sublime in its Nature, so impossible to be found out by human Reason if it had not been revealed, that carries in it such Appearance of Contradiction at first, so exceeding hard to explain and reconcile even when 'tis well consider'd by us, so shocking and offensive in the most usual Explications of it, that it can hardly be suppos'd how it should enter into the Minds of Men at first; to all which let me add, an Article that appears so contrary to the first and plainest Principle of Natural Religion, (u) the Being of One God.* Now Sir, when so strange and surprizing an Article as this, so shocking, &c. was first to be explicitly made known, (x) who would not expect that it should be most expressly declared, and frequently insisted on by them who were to reveal it to the World? especially, if this very Doctrine be that which contains in it and carries with it the Substance and Glory of that New Religion they were to publish to Men, and is the very Basis and Foundation of it. Can it be thought that this main Foundation of the whole Frame, and which of all things, upon the accounts before mentioned, most needed to be established by express Authority from God, should not be so much as once mentioned (y) in the Revelation? be left only to be infer'd from some obscure References to Passages in the Old

(u) Pref. p. 13.

(x) P. 4.

(y) Our Author thinks that the Words in 1 John 5. 7. *These Three are one*, do evidently mean a *Oneness in the Divine Nature*, p. 140. He owns that some have disputed the Genuineness of that Text; however he tells us that *he thinks there are good Reasons to prove it Apostolical*. This may satisfy those who will be determined by his Judgment. As I cannot suppose that any will pay such Deference to my Judgment, it will signify nothing for me to say, that I think there are good Reasons to suspect it; and this is not a place to discuss the Reasons on the one side and the other. They that have a mind to be satisfy'd in this Matter, may consult what hath been wrote by Mr. Martin in Defence of the Text, and by Mr. Emlyn against it. But this I would observe to our Author, that the *Complutensian Edition*, which is one main Support for this Passage of *the three Witnesses in Heaven*, reads the latter Clause of that Verse *εἰς τὸ ἓν, agree in one*; which entirely overthrows his and the common Remark, *viz. that the different Expression in this Verse [They are one] must mean some superior and more intimate Union or Oneness, than the three Witnesses on Earth pretended to*. He adds, *And what can this more justly*

Old Testament, or from some incidental Expressions that we meet with in their discoursing of other Matters? I may, I think, appeal, not only to you and all men unprejudiced, but even to themselves as to this Point; and I do now appeal to their own Consciences, whether they should not think it natural and reasonable to expect that such a Doctrine as this should be very *expressly declared* in the Revelation that God was pleased to give to Men.

This being granted (and I think it must be granted by themselves) I advance a step farther. There being no *Mention* of this Doctrine in the whole Revelation, this alone may, it would naturally, and I think must necessarily, give any Man, who is not before-hand possess'd with the Belief of the Doctrine, a strong Presumption that it is not at all contained in those Writings, and that the Founders of our Religion never taught this Doctrine. The Inferences from any particular Passages or Expressions, or from comparing one Place with another,

ly be apply'd to than a Oneness in the Divine Nature? But supposing it to be read as we have it [*are one;*] it is well known that learned Men of his own Party, have thought this no Proof of what our Author contends for. And indeed it appears evidently from the Context, that the Apostle had no such Meaning as that *these three are one God*; for in the following Words, when he opposes the Witness of God to the Witness of Men, it is plain that by GOD he means *only the Father, for this is the Witness of God which he hath witnessed concerning HIS SON.* And let me add, This makes it probable to me that the Passage of the *three Witnesses in Heaven* is not the Apostle's. For is it to be suppos'd, that having mentioned three Witnesses in Heaven, he should immediately afterwards, when he is shewing the Pre-eminence of this Testimony to the Testimony of Men, take notice but of *one* of these Witnesses, and *pass by* the other Two? If it be said, that neither doth he take notice here of the Spirit, nor of the Water and the Blood; I answer: The Testimony of the Spirit is the Testimony of God, God bearing Witness by the Holy Ghost, *Heb. 2. 4.* and the Water and the Blood are not properly Witnesses, *not Persons* bearing witness, but Means whereby the Testimony of God concerning his Son is conveyed and confirmed to us: *This is he that came by Water and Blood, even Jesus Christ, v. 6.* But in this Passage now contended for, here are three *Persons* mentioned as three distinct Witnesses. That the Apostle representing the Validity of this Testimony, should take notice but of One of these, and entirely drop the other Two Witnesses, who according to the Hypothesis of our Adversaries are of *equal* Authority, is (to speak modestly) what I cannot easily suppose.

ther, ought to be very clear and evidently necessary, before one should venture to draw so strange a Conclusion from them.

You may remember, Sir, what Use our Friend would make of the *Strangeness* of this Doctrine. He would conclude from thence, that it *can hardly be suppos'd how it should enter into Men's Minds, if it had not been plainly reveal'd and strongly confirm'd in Scripture*. I make another Use of it. If this be an Article so strange, so shocking to Reason, &c. it can hardly be supposed, if it were reveal'd by the Apostles, that in all the Account we have of their Preaching to *Jews and Gentiles*, in all the Disputes there were among Christians, in a word, that in all their Writings there should be no Occasion for *once mentioning it*, or taking the least Notice of it. Was it not as shocking to the *Gentiles* in those Times, as it is to us in our Times? did this give no Uneasiness? were there no Objections started against it? Did not Christians need to be established and confirmed in this great Article of Faith, as well as in other Points of Christian Religion? But behold! Not one Occasion to mention this new and surprizing Doctrine of *Three Persons and One God*. How can one help being strongly tempted to suspect, that in truth there was no such Doctrine heard of at that Time?

This will appear the more likely, when one observes how very *differently* it falls out, where this Doctrine is really maintain'd and propagated. Would any of our zealous *Trinitarians* go about to convert a Heathen Nation, and say not a Word to them of *Father, Son, and Spirit being One God*? Would they not rather begin here? lay the Foundation, in giving them this right Knowledge of the True God, and be continually recurring to it and insisting upon it? You have a real Instance of this in the *Conferences of the Danish Missionaries*. There you will find most of their Disputes and Conferences to be about this Doctrine of the *Tri-un-God*. That we meet with nothing like this in the Writings of the New Testament, what can we impute it to but this, that in truth they knew no such Doctrine?

It will be said, This is only a *Negative Argument*. Be it so. I am perswaded that you, or any unprejudiced Person, will think there had need be very plain, necessary, and, as our Author speaks, *resistless* Proofs to convince a Man of the contrary. I may add, 'Tis such a

sort of Argument as many learned Men (of their own side) have made use of against the Church of Rome, in their Controversies with her about the many new Doctrines she had introduced and imposed upon the Christian World; and have thought abundantly sufficient to overthrow her Pretences. By the same way of arguing have they confuted the Notion of the *Man Christ Jesus having been taken up to Heaven and come down from thence*, which some who formerly opposed the Trinitarian Scheme had invented, in order to account for some Passages of Scripture that speak of Christ as having been in Heaven. In these Cases, themselves have thought such negative Arguments of sufficient Force; and I doubt not but any impartial Person will perceive as great Force in that we have been insisting on, as in any that have been used in the fore-mentioned Cases.

But this is not all. We observe that the whole Current of the New Testament, yea and many express Declarations of it, do hold forth the direct contrary, and are utterly inconsistent with their Notion. We find there that One of the three Persons, and *he only* is in the strict and proper Sense the Living and the True God: In short, that the *One God* of Christians, the *One God* whom the Gospel reveals and teaches Men to acknowledge, is the FATHER of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *He only*.

S. II. You may remember, we observed before, that God is always represented in Scripture, as *One single Person*. I am persuaded that the most learned of our Adversaries will not be able to produce one Instance to the contrary out of the whole Bible; One Instance, I say, where they can make it appear to the satisfaction of any unprejudiced Person, that the true God is spoken of as including more Persons than one. That the *Jews* had this Notion in our Saviour's Time, is past doubt. And if you will observe all *Christ's* Discourses with them, as well as the Discourses of the *Apostles* afterwards; you will find that both Christ himself and his Apostles, when they speak of GOD, mean no other than the Person of the FATHER. It cannot be shown that in any one Instance (where they speak of *God* absolutely) they mean any other; in many Passages it is evident to every Man that reads them, that they cannot possibly be understood to mean any other. This, one would think, might be enough. You will bear with

with me while I mention a few Instances. You perhaps may think it needless; but did you know the Importunity of our Adversaries, and the inveterate Prejudice that many have taken up against us, you would excuse us in insisting upon the most plain things, and endeavouring, if possible, to give them Entrance into the Minds of Men.

The first Instance I shall take notice of, is our Saviour's Discourse with *Nicodemus*. *Nicodemus* comes to Christ, and owns himself convinc'd that He was a Teacher come from God: For no Man, says he, can do these Things except God be with him. Afterwards Christ tells him, GOD so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son — GOD sent not his Son into the World, &c. (3d Ch. of St. John's Gospel) And now we are looking into this Chapter, I will read also the Words of *Jahn* the Baptist: He whom GOD hath sent, speaketh the Words of GOD, for GOD giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. The FATHER loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his Hands — He that believeth not the Son shall not see Life, but the Wrath of GOD abideth on him. Is it not plain throughout these Discourses, that God and the Father are equivalent Terms denoting one and the same Person?

Take another Instance from the next Chapter. The Woman of Samaria asks Christ about the Place of Worship. In Christ's Answer you will see, who was the GOD the Jews worshipped, even the FATHER. Jesus saith to her, the Hour cometh when ye shall neither at this place nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what. We know what we worship. The Hour cometh and now is, when the true Worshipers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth. For the Father seeketh such to worship him. GOD is a Spirit, and they that worship him, &c. It hath been lately suggested by some of great Authority with our Author, (z) that the Term [Father] doth not in Scripture every where denote the Person so call'd, but is often to be understood of the Divine Essence absolutely consider'd. According to this Observation it may be thought that here will be room for including the Son and Spirit too. But, Sir, do you imagine that the People of the Jews and the Woman of Samaria had this refin'd Notion, and ever thought of worshipping an absolute abstract Essence, and not a Person? If you can persuade
your

(z) Four London Ministers, p. 23.

your self of this, let this Passage go for nothing. Yet I might observe to you, that upon this Supposition, they cannot pretend to include the Two Persons together with the Father; but indeed, according to this curious Remark, here must be an abstracting from all Persons, and a worshipping *no Person at all*. But I believe every one who reads this Discourse of our Lord, yea any *Trinitarian*, while he was not apprehensive of an Objection to be raised from it, would readily understand by *the Father who seeketh such to worship him*, a Person; and never dream of an absolute and abstract *Essence*. But without recurring to abstract *Essence*, I have heard it said, that when our Lord directs us to pray to *Our Father who is in Heaven*, it may intend, not the First Person of the Trinity singly, but the Three conjunctly, Father, Son, and Spirit. Well, but this is the Father whom our Lord himself worshipped; for he includes himself among the *Jews*, *We know what we worship*. There is a Refuge still. We are told that Christ himself the Son of God, worshipped *Father, Son, and Spirit*; that as Man he worshipped himself as God. But is not this plainly to make Christ Two Persons, which is directly contrary to their own Hypothesis? Truly, Sir, I do freely give up all the Advantage I expected from this and other Passages of like Nature, to sink under the Weight of such Remarks, if so be they can have any just Weight with you.

I shall trouble you but with one Passage more from our Lord's Discourses with the *Jews*, and that is in the 8th Chap. of this Gospel. *I speak that which I have seen with my Father.—And now ye seek to kill me, a Man that hath told you the Truth which he hath heard of God—They said unto him, We have one Father, even God—If God were your Father you would love me, for I proceeded and came forth from God, neither came I of my self, but he sent me.—If I honour my self, my Honour is nothing; it is my Father that honoureth me, of whom you say that he is your God.* Now, Sir, do you not plainly see in these Instances, that both the *Jews* and our Lord himself do all along suppose that GOD who had revealed himself to the *Jews*, and whom they acknowledged as their God and Father, was HE whom Christ called his FATHER? And I am persuaded that you will find no one Instance but what is perfectly agreeable to this Notion.

But

But it may be our Saviour would be more open, and discourse in another manner with his Disciples. Let us for our Satisfaction look into his *private* Discourses with them. You find still (if I may so call it) the same Phraseology; by the word *God* is every where meant the *Father*; and these two are used as synonomous or equivalent Terms. When he was alone with his Disciples, and Judas was gone out, *Jesus saith, Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him; and if God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself.*—*Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many Mansions.*—*The Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and believed that I came out from God. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the World: again I leave the World, and go to the Father.*—*His Disciples said, By this we know that thou camest forth from God.* Observe also (which is the last thing I shall mention under this Head) how our Lord expresses himself in his solemn Addresses to his Father before his Offering; *Father, the Hour is come; glorify thy Son.*—*This is Life eternal, to know thee the Only true God, &c.* These last words we shall have Occasion to consider more particularly hereafter.

From these and the like Passages it appears, not only that He whom Christ calls his Father was God; but that *this Person* was, if I may so express it, *the whole* of what was comprehended in the Term *God*. This I would have you particularly take notice of. *God*, in the Language of our Saviour, in the Apprehension of the *Jews*, and of the Disciples, means no more, includes no other, than the *Person* whom our Blessed Saviour calls his *Father*.

But it may be this great Mystery was not to be revealed before the Coming down of the *Holy Ghost* upon the Apostles, when Christ should shew them plainly of the *Father*. Well! What Discoveries do we meet with in their Discourses after the *Holy Ghost* came upon them? Observe, I pray you, how they speak of *G O D* both to *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and how they preach *Christ*. Do you find any Intimation of a *Plurality of Persons* in that *God* of whom they speak, and whom they made known to the Heathen World? Not a Word to this purpose, not the least Hint, nothing that looks this way; but still the same Notion is carried on: wherever they make mention of *God*, or professedly discourse of him, it is manifestly *One Person*, and this Person the *Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*.

Let

Let me recite some few Passages in the Account of the Apostles Preaching in the Book of the *Acts*. See how St. Peter addresses to the Jews, immediately after the Descent of the Holy Ghost, (Ch. 2.) *Ye Men of Israel, hear these Words. Jesus of Nazareth, a Man approved of God among you by Miracles and Signs which God did by him; Him being delivered by the determinate Counsel and Foreknowledge of God, ye have taken—whom God hath raised up—This Jesus hath God raised up—Therefore being by the Right-hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the Promise of the Holy Ghost—Therefore let all the House of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified both Lord and Christ.* See a second Discourse of the same Apostle, Ch. 3. *The God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our Fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus.* See here who it was St. Peter took for the GOD of Abraham, &c. did he, think you, comprehend in his Notion or Idea of the GOD of Israel, three Persons, Father, Son and Holy Ghost? It will be said perhaps, He did not think fit as yet to reveal this Mystery, and therefore speaks of God only according to that partial defective Notion which the Jews had of him. But could he indeed justly and properly say, *the God of your Fathers hath sent his Son*; if so be the God of Israel were really Father, Son and Spirit? However, this cannot be deny'd, that here he speaks only of the Father as the God of Israel; and cannot possibly be understood to comprehend any other Person in that Term or under that Title in his whole Discourse. HE is the Lord their God, who promised to raise up to them a Prophet like unto Moses, v. 22. *the God who made a Covenant with their Fathers, saying to Abraham, In thy Seed shall all the Kindreds of the Earth be blessed,* v. 25. See how he concludes that Discourse: *To you first, GOD having raised up his SON Jesus, hath sent him to bless you.*

In the next Chap. you have a very remarkable Passage; there you may see the Sense of the whole Christian Church at that Time, v. 24. They all join together in a solemn Address to God. Read it, and judge from thence whether it be likely that they had at that time been instructed in the Doctrine of three Persons being the One God: *They lift up their Voice to GOD with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art GOD, which hast made Heaven and*

and Earth, &c. which hast said by the Mouth of thy Servant David, why do the Heathen rage? — For of a truth against thy holy Child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, &c. were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy Hand and Counsel determined before to be done. And now Lord, behold their Threatning, and grant — that Signs and Wonders may be done by the Name of thy holy Child Jesus.

If you will read St. Paul's Discourse to the Jews at Antioch, Chap. 13. you will find it runs exactly in the same Strain. You may, if you think it needful, look it over at your leisure. But there is one other Discourse of St. Paul, that you must give me leave to mention, because it deserves our particular Notice upon this Occasion. It is the Discourse he made to the Athenians on purpose to make known to them the Unknown God. As I passed by, says he, and beheld your Devotions, I found an Altar with this Inscription, To the Unknown God: Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you. And what is the Account he gives them of this Unknown God? perfectly agreeable to what the Light of Nature teaches concerning God; as one intelligent Agent, All-sufficient, the Maker of all Things. Do you find there any thing of Three Persons having Communion in the One Godhead? not a tittle. But he lets them know, that this God whom he had now declared to them, had sent Christ into the World, and would certainly judge the World by him. The Times of this Ignorance GOD winked at, but now commandeth all Men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a Day in the which he will judge the World in Righteousness by that Man whom he hath ordained.

As yet we are to seek for the Revelation of this Mystery of three Persons and one God. We have gone over some of the most remarkable Discourses of the Apostles at their first publishing the Christian Doctrine; there appears not in any of them, as far as I can perceive, the least shadow of any Alteration made in the Notion that Jews or Gentiles had of the One God. They understood by the One God, One Person; and this Person the Apostles declare to be the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have not yet met with any Instructions for taking in Two other Persons with him into Communion in the One Godhead. If our learned Friend had lived in those Times, I suppose he would not have been put to the Difficulty of constraining his Faith to submit to a Doctrine so shocking to Reason; for I think we have sufficient Ground to believe, that the good Christians of those

Times did take up with Ideas of the Trinity, that were less subject to the Cavils of human Reason, and might be more easily comprehended and reconciled. (a)

But possibly we who have the entire Writings of the New Testament, may have attain'd to higher Degrees of Knowledge. What might not be thought so convenient to be proposed to *Jews* or *Gentiles* at the first Beginning of Christianity, while their Minds were as yet too much under the Power and Influence of former Prejudices, might afterwards be more particularly and fully laid open to Christians. Tho indeed, if this were, (as is often said) the very Foundation of the Gospel, I know not how we shall account for the Apostles leaving their Proselytes (for any thing that appears to us) in such entire Ignorance of it. One would rather have thought that they should always have begun here, and have laid this down as one of the *first Principles of the Oracles of God*. But we will suppose that the explicit Knowledge of this Mystery might be dispens'd with for a while, even under the Gospel state. The Apostle, we know, doth make a Difference; there is *Milk for Babes*, and *strong Meat* for those of a riper Understanding. Let us therefore pursue our Enquiry, and see how the Apostles, who were to declare to Men the whole Mystery of Godliness, do speak of God in their other Writings. We have several of their *Epistles* directed to *Christians*; some of them had been of long standing in the Christian Religion, and have received great Commendations from the Apostles for their Improvement, and the Advances they had made in Christian Knowledge. If here also we find the same Notion of God; if throughout these Writings, and even among them that were perfect (as one Apostle styles them, 1 Cor. 2. 6.) and to whom they had fully made known the hidden *Mysteries of God*, it appears that still they always speak of GOD as *One Person*; and by innumerable Places it be evident beyond all Contradiction, that the Person intended when they use the Term GOD, is solely the *Father*; you will, I am persuaded, begin to think the Point pretty near being decided.

I had thought to have gone through all the remaining Books of the New Testament, and taken notice of some Passages in every one. But this I fear you would think too tedious. However, let me desire you at your leisure, to go

over

(a) Vid. P. 168.

over the New Testament, with this View; I doubt not but you will soon perceive, that according to the whole Strain of those Sacred Writings, GOD, when he is spoken of simply and absolutely, means the *Father*. Some few Places I grant there are, where the Title of *God* is given to *Christ*; (which we shall account for hereafter) but this is very different from what we are now considering. When the sacred Writers speak of GOD absolutely, *our God, God our Father, the living and true God to whom the Gentiles turned from Idols*, in some Hundreds of Places, it can mean only the *Father*; there is no Evidence that at any time it includes either of the two other Persons in conjunction with him; not one Place where so much as the Name or Title of *God* is directly given to the *third Person*. Now can we imagine that the inspired Writers should continually give us only this *partial* Representation of God; that they should so often (if I may so express it) omit Two Parts in Three of what is to be included in the Notion, or under the Term *God*, according to the Hypothesis of our Adversaries; that the Two Persons who, according to their Doctrine, do *equally communicate in the One Godhead*, and have equal Claim to be comprehended in the Name, should be in such Multitudes of Instances manifestly left out, and never appear in any one Instance to be jointly included? This I believe will appear to you very strange and unaccountable, and, unless there be indeed *resistless Proofs* to the contrary, altogether incredible.

§. 12. Besides what we have observed from the whole Strain of the Scripture Language concerning GOD, we have this farther to offer. In several Places where the New Testament directly speaks of the *One true God*, it doth most expressly confine this Character to *One Person*, and appropriate it to the *Father* by way of Distinction from, and Exclusion of, the other two Persons. You may remember the Words of our Lord himself in his solemn Address to his Father, *John 17. 1, 2, 3. Jesus lift up his Eyes to Heaven and said, Father, the Hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee. As thou hast given him Power over all Flesh, that he should give eternal Life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is Life eternal, to know thee the Only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* Another Passage as home to the Point you have from *St. Paul, 1 Cor. 8. 6. For tho there be that are*

called Gods, whether in Heaven or in Earth (as there be Gods many, and Lords many) But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. A Third we have Eph. 4. 6. *There is one Body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling, One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.* I will add one more, which, I am satisfy'd, will appear no less plain than any of the former, when duly consider'd, that is 1 Tim. 2. 5. *Who will have all Men to be saved, and to come unto the Knowledge of the Truth: For there is One God, and one Mediator between God and Men, the Man Christ Jesus.* These one would think should be decisive. Could you have imagin'd, when you read these Passages in the New Testament, that it should ever be a matter of Controversy among Christians, whether the One true God be *One Person* or *Three Persons*, or that ever it should be pretended that Two other Persons are equally included together with the Father in the One living and true God?

But since you have seen that this is made a matter of Controversy, you will conclude they have studied some Evasions for these plain Texts. These we must take notice of, or they will say we have not done them Justice. And really it would pity one to see how they are pinch'd and entangled. But whereas they think, that those other Arguments upon which they build their Hypothesis do evince the contrary, they must give some turn to these Expressions, if possible, to reconcile them to their Doctrine, and, as they imagine, to make the Scriptures consistent with themselves. Let us see how our learned Friend will extricate himself out of this Difficulty. He would seem to make light of it, but I fear he will not so easily get clear of it, as he imagines. We shall try how the Expedient will answer. You will find his Solution, p. 130. 'Wheresoever any such Expression is found in Scripture, attributing the only true Godhead to one of these, it is not to be suppos'd that it excludes the other Two from Communion in the *only true Godhead*; but rather to shew that there is no other *true Godhead*, but what belongs to these.' By the manner of Expression in this Passage one would think that the Scriptures did frequently attribute the Title of the *only true God* indifferently to any of the Three. But this is a Fallacy. No; there is no such Inconsistency found in the Scriptures; it is merely in their own Scheme; and

and they must not think to make the Scripture answerable for it. We do aver that the Title of the *One God*, or the *only true God*, is appropriated to the Person of the Father. And we demand of them to make this consistent with their Hypothesis, *i. e.* How it can be true that *Two other Persons are equally and jointly with him the One true God*, when the Scripture says of the Father, that He is the *Only true God*, and plainly confines this Character of the *One true God* to his Person?

Our Author, however, hath suggested, that *there are some Texts wherein our Lord Jesus Christ may seem to be represented as the only true God*. It was highly convenient he should offer at somewhat of this Nature, that he might bring in the Scripture as concerned together with himself and Friends in this Difficulty, and they might shelter themselves under that sacred Authority. Yet you see he speaks cautiously and doubtfully, *may seem to be represented as the only true God*.

Let us however examine these Texts. The first is *Isa. 45. 21, 22. There is no God else beside me, a just God, and a Saviour, there is none beside me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the Ends of the Earth; for I am God, and there is none else*. Now I would ask, How he can know that it is the *Person of Christ* that is intended in these Words, if so be they may as well be spoken of another Person? If they may not be understood of another Person, then he must grant that *every other Person* is excluded. This is the Method he himself takes in arguing from another Passage in the Old Testament, where it is prophesied of Christ, that he shall be called the *Lord our Righteousness*. He concludes that *Jehovah* there cannot be meant of the Person of the Father, but that Christ *must be the Person meant in those Words*, because what is there spoken cannot belong to the Person of the Father, but doth belong to the Person of Christ. (b) We own that this arguing is just (if the Supposition be true, which we shall enquire into hereafter) and it is indeed the only way of arguing in these Cases. But will our Friend allow of this arguing here? Will he say, *Christ must be the Person meant in these Words, because they cannot belong to the Person of the Father*? Then indeed he hath brought the matter to a fine Pass. Here is the second Person stiled the
Only

(b) P. 41, 42.

Only true God, *exclusive* of the *First Person*. This is not only to prove that he hath *Communion* (as our Author speaks) *in the One Godhead*, but that he hath it *all to himself*; and instead of representing the only true Godhead as *subsisting and acting in three distinct Persons*, confining it to one only, even the *Second Person*. When a Man reads such Passages as these, *I am God, and there is none else*; can he possibly understand them in any other Sense than this, that the [*None else*] in the latter part of the Sentence is exclusive of every other that is not included in the [*I*] speaking in the former part? Can any thing be more plain? All that remains then, is to enquire, who is the Person speaking? who is intended by the [*I*] who utters this solemn Declaration? Is it the Person of Christ, as our Author would have it? Why then let him say, that there is *no other Person, who is God, besides him*. Or if there be nothing that doth appropriate it to the Person of Christ, nothing but what may be understood to belong to the Father, and may be properly spoken concerning him; how doth he prove that it is not the Person of the Father that is here intended? Or doth the singular Person [*I*] include both, yea, the three Persons? that is, by our Author's Comment, *I, and my Son, and my Spirit, are God, and there is none besides Me and Them*. What is this but to confound all Language, and to make Words signify nothing, or signify any thing, just as we please? With this liberty of interpreting, I question whether our Friend would not be put to it to make out his *three distinct Persons*; which he thinks so clear and undeniable. If one Person may sometimes comprehend three, may not the three as well sometimes intend no more than one; or every one of those three also comprehend three? And if this be the Case, we had e'en as good content our selves with saying nothing about the matter.

A second Text, that according to our Author *seems to represent Christ as the Only God*, is in the New Testament, *Jud. 5. last, To the only wise God our Saviour, &c.* And this is brought in among his Proofs. (c) I suppose he had then no Hesitation about it; it is positively asserted that this Character doth belong to Christ. But let us see how he makes it appear. *It appears*, says he, *not only from this, that he is*
called

(c) P. 46. as also p. 49.

called our Saviour, which is Christ's special Title; but 'tis he who shall present the Church to himself. See Eph. 5. 25, 27. Our Saviour, is, says our Author, *Christ's special Title*. What doth he mean by *special Title*? that it is appropriated to him, and not apply'd to the Father? If this be not his meaning, he had as good say nothing. If this be his meaning, he is greatly mistaken. I will give you two or three Instances where this Title of *God our Saviour* is undeniably given to the Father. See 1 Tim. 1. beg. *Paul an Apostle of Jesus Christ by the Commandment of God our Saviour, and the Lord Jesus Christ which is our Hope*. Chap. 2. ver. 3. *This is acceptable in the Sight of God our Saviour*. That it is the Person of the Father that is here spoken of, you will easily perceive if you read the following Words, *Who will have all Men to be saved, &c. For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and Men*. It is the Person with whom Christ mediates. The same Person is said to have saved us, and called us with an holy calling, 2 Ep. 1. 9. See also Tit. 3. 4. *But after that the Kindness and Love of God our Saviour towards Man appeared*—— according to his Mercy he saved us, by the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly thro Jesus Christ our Saviour. You see that this Title of *God our Saviour* is not a special Title of Christ. Nay rather, may we not on the contrary be justly led to conclude that it is to be understood of the Father; seeing that in several Places it doth manifestly belong to him, and it cannot be shown that it is ever given to Christ? This I should think the most natural Interpretation, if there shall appear nothing in the Text or in the Context that will oblige us to the contrary. And will our Author say, that it may not be properly said of the Father, that *he presents us faultless before the Presence of his Glory*? I don't find that he will insist on this. He only observes that it is said of Christ that *he presents his Church to himself, &c.* Surely these Two may be very well consistent. I need not observe to you, that every thing that is done in us and upon us in order to the bringing us to Salvation, is ascribed to the Father; the establishing, preserving, keeping us blameless unto the Day of the Lord Jesus; yea, and particularly the presenting us holy, unblameable, and unreprouable in his Sight, Col. 1. 22. If you consult the Context, you will find that those Words are spoken of the Father. And is there any so great Difference between the Expression, [*Presenting us holy and unblameable, and unreprouable in his Sight*], and this in Jude [*Presenting*

us faultless before the Presence of his Glory] that we must necessarily conclude that this latter cannot be understood of the Person of the Father, when the former is undoubtedly spoken of him? Doth not the Psalmist say, that God should guide him by his Counsel, and afterwards receive him to his Glory? Are we not told that the Saints are day and night before the Throne of God; that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath chosen us in Christ before the Foundation of the World, that we should be holy and unblameable before him in Love? Eph. 1. 4. St. Paul prays for the Thessalonians, that their Hearts may be established unblameable in Holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his Saints. I cannot imagine where should be the Difficulty, or what Pretence there can be of any necessity for not understanding this of the Person of the Father. To this I may add, that it appears plainly the Father is intended by the word God a few Verses before, where God is spoken of as distinct both from Christ and from the Holy Ghost: But ye, beloved, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep your selves in the Love of God, looking for the Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ. When we consider also that this Title of the only wise God is in other Texts manifestly apply'd to the Father, I think there can be no reason to doubt but that he is the Person meant here; and we may very well suppose that St. Jude addresses his Doxology to the same Person as St. Paul does in the Conclusion of his Epistle to the Romans: Now to him who is of Power to stablish you according to my Gospel; to God only wise, be Glory through Jesus Christ. They are so nearly parallel, that one would imagine St. Jude had this of St. Paul then in his Thoughts. Upon the whole, I am apt to think you will judge that our Friend had good reason in his cooler Thoughts to speak more doubtfully of this Text, than he did at first when he was in the Heat of Courage marshalling his Forces, and settling the Battle in Array.

There remains yet one more Text produced by our Author in Proof of Christ's being stiled the only God. This is also in St. Jude's Epistle. Here indeed our Friend doth not directly give it us as his own Judgment. He only says, that some learned Writers suppose, that the whole Title in the 4th Verse belongs to Christ, that he is there called our Only Master, God, and Lord: But as far as I can find, upon no other pretence than this, that the Words in the Greek are capable of such Interpretation, and (as he thinks) Christ is called

Despotes

Despotes in the 2d Epistle of Peter, of which this Epistle of Jude seems to be an Epiome. But what Proof have they that the Lord that bought them in 2 Pet. 2. 1. must be understood of Christ? What Incongruity is there in understanding it of the Father? Is he not thy Father who hath bought thee? says Moses to Israel speaking of God, Deut. 32. 6. Did he not give his Son for us? Are not our Bodies and our Spirits his, because we are bought with a Price? 1 Cor. 6. 20. We are properly his purchased Possession, that we should shew forth the Praises of him who hath called us out of Darkness into his marvellous Light, 1 Pet. 2. 9. This doth not at all interfere with Christ's purifying unto himself a peculiar People. For all his are the Father's, and all the Father's are his, Joh. 17. 10. And he hath redeemed us unto God, Rev. 5. 9. Christ gave himself for us. God so loved the World, as to give his only begotten Son. God spared him not, but delivered him up for us all. God made him to be Sin for us. I hope there is no Inconsistency in all this. But were it so, that in St. Peter's Epistle, the Lord that bought us doth mean Christ, doth it therefore follow that the Title of the only Lord God in St. Jude must mean Christ too? We read in other places the Title of [*Monos Theos*] the only God, apply'd to the Father; we read of [*Monos Dunastes*] the only Potentate, (of much the same Import with this of *Despotes*) apply'd to the Father; we find no other Place of Scripture where either of these is applied to Christ: Why then may we not understand these Expressions here, as well as in other Places, of God the Father? especially when it is apparent that in this Epistle, the Term *God* is used to denote the Person of the Father, according to the usual Acceptation throughout the New Testament. It is likely that St. Jude intends here the same sort of Hereticks as St. John speaks of in his Epistle, viz. such as denied both the Father and the Son, Chap. 2. 22.

We may now, I suppose, venture to proceed, since there appears so little shadow of Reason for applying any of these Texts to the Person of Christ: Nothing, I am sure, that should hinder us from applying any one of them full as well to the Father. And as to the *Holy Ghost*, it is not pretended there are any Texts that do so much as seem to attribute this Title of the *Only God* to him. We are therefore at liberty now to consider the express Declarations of Scripture, representing the Father

alone as the *One true God*; and you shall judge whether our Friend's *Salvo* will bring him off, and secure his Doctrine from the Charge of a direct Contradiction to the exprefs Declarations of Scripture.

He tells us, that *such Expressions are to shew that there is no other true Godhead but what belongs to the Person to whom this Title is attributed*, and that 'tis not to be suppos'd that the Scripture in attributing this Title to one, excludes the other two from Communion in the only true Godhead (d). I shall not here trouble him with enquiring what he means by the *One true Godhead*, which according to him *subsists and acts in three distinct Persons*. Supposing for the present that it hath some Meaning, let us see how it will suit with the Texts, and account for the Expressions of Scripture. *That they may know thee the only true God*, that is, says our Author, that they may know thee *who hast the only true Godhead*. I believe, Sir, that upon your reading those words of Christ you little thought of this Turn, that by *thee the only true God* was to be understood no more than this, *Thou hast the only true Godhead, which others have in Communion with thee*. And I question whether you will now think them capable of such a Turn. When a Man acknowledges King George to be his *only* rightful and lawful Sovereign, should any suggest that he means only, *that King George is indeed possess'd of the only rightful and lawful Sovereignty over him, but that this he hath in Conjunction with one or two more, each of whom he acknowledges his Only rightful and lawful Sovereign as well as King George*; I am afraid the Man would think himself very much injur'd, and never have dreamt that any could have put so strange an Interpretation upon Words so plain and obvious. You have read it may be the *Roman History*; there were often Two Emperors at a time, who had the same Titles, the same Honours, and were equal sharers in the Supreme Power. Now in this Case, should any Person addressing to One of them singly, stile him the *Only true Emperor*; I am apt to think the other would reckon that he had just cause to resent it: And do you imagine the Man would bring himself off by such a Fetch as this, that *he meant*

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no more but that *He* whom he address'd to was possessor of the only true Empire, not excluding the *Other* who was Partner with him, whom he own'd to be entitled to the Honour of being the Only true Emperor, as well as *He* to whom he had address'd himself?

Let us apply this Gloss to the other Texts. To us there is *One God*. What will our Friend understand by this? doth it mean only that there is one Godhead? If we could make Sense of this Interpretation, what would we gain by it, since this one Godhead is here declar'd to be the *Father*, plainly in contradistinction to *Christ*? But if by the word *God* be meant *he that hath true Godhead*, then certainly when the Apostle says, *To us there is One God*, he says *To us there is One who hath true Godhead*. And this he says in opposition to the *Gods* many that were acknowledged by others. Here then you see, who is the One God whom the Christians owned, even the *FATHER*; as *Jesus Christ* is the *one Lord Mediator*.

We shall find that the substituting the *one Godhead* will do our Friend no more Service in the next Passage we produc'd from *St. Paul*. *There is one Spirit, one Lord, one God even the Father of all*. Is that *One God the Father of all*, the *one Lord*? or doth it mean, there is one Godhead which is in the Father of all, and which is in the one Lord also, and in the one Spirit? Might he not with as good Warrant from the Text say that the one Body is the one Spirit, or indeed that all the Things mentioned there are one and the same, and have all of them *Communion in the one Godhead*?

Let us consider also the other Text we mentioned, *There is one God, and one Mediator between God and Men, the Man Christ Jesus*. There is one Godhead, and one Mediator between the Godhead and Men, the Man Christ Jesus. But is the Person of *Christ* included in this one Godhead, and doth the one God here mean *Father, Son and Spirit*? Is this what the Author boasts of as the plain natural Meaning of Scripture *obvious to every Capacity*? Is this the way the Scripture takes to express it self in a matter of such awful Importance, in a Fundamental Doctrine of Christianity? What would any Man understand by the Expression *There is one God*, but this, *that there is one*, but one, *who hath true Godhead*? It's true, a celebrated Writer in this Controversy hath pronounced it He-

resy, to say *There is but one who is God* (e). When Christ says, *There is none good but one, that is God*, is not this the same as to say, *There is but one who is good*? Doubtless the one Expression is as heretical as the other, unless the Heresy lies in the Position of the Words. And as to this Text, *There is one God and one Mediator*, &c. our Adversaries do allow that the latter Clause means, *There is but one who is Mediator*; and from this Text condemn the *Romish Church* for introducing Saints and Angels as Intercessors with God. And is it not as plainly intended in the former Clause, that *There is but one who is God*, even he with whom Christ mediates? Who would think that the Interpretation they give of the latter Clause should be right and necessary, and the same way of interpreting the same Manner of Expression in the other part of the Verse, be false and heretical? And now, who is that *One* who hath the true Godhead? it is He with whom Christ mediates. And need I ask the Christian who it is with whom Christ mediates on the behalf of Men? Can any be in doubt concerning this, who hath looked into the New Testament? Do we find any thing there of Christ's being Mediator between us and the Holy Ghost? Nor yet would this be sufficient, unless we could find some Intimations of his being a Mediator between us and himself.

§. 13. Our Author in his *Preface*, reckons the Notion of One God the *first and plainest Principle of Natural Religion*; so indeed it hath been always esteemed. But now in order to support this Scheme of theirs, you see this plain Principle is become the most perplexed, confused, intricate Business that ever Men had to puzzle their Heads with. Before this, it was thought that Men understood well enough what was meant by *One God*; but according to this Doctrine there is nothing (as they themselves upon occasion do not stick to own) more difficult to explain; and, as our Friend intimates, it needs some great *Genius*, such as hath not yet appeared in the World, to make it plain to us (f). Indeed he would seem to speak there only with reference to the *Manner* of the Distinction and the Unity, but it is manifest from his whole

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(e) Waterland's *Queries*, p. 349.

(f) P. 163.

Discourse that the Difficulty with him lies all in the *Unity*; for as to the *Distinction*, his account of it is clear enough. Every one understands what is meant by *three Intelligent Agents*; but now when he comes to the *Unity*, how miserably is he put to it to give any account of it that should make it appear consistent with the other? There is a *Sameness of Godhead that belongs to these three*; a *Communion in the one Godhead*; the *one true Godhead subsists and acts in three Persons*; there is a *Oneness of the divine Nature*. We understand our selves when we speak of one general or specifick Nature; but will this do here? no, who doth not see the Consequence? then there will be *three Gods*, as three Persons having Communion in the same human Nature, are three Men. Nor yet do I see how these Gentlemen will be able to ward off the Consequence after all their Caution. Certainly he that hath true Godhead is God; when I am told that there are *three who have equally true Godhead*, how natural is it to infer, *Then there are three Gods*? No, says our Author, it is a *sameness of Godhead*, it is *one Godhead* that is common to the three. But what Notion are we to have of this *one Godhead*? what doth it mean? here we are set fast, here we want the great *Genius*; till he come we must be content not to know what the *Unity* is (*g*), whether it be specifical *Unity*, or Numerical, or neither (*h*).

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(*g*) Dr. Waterland gives this Account of the Matter, Querys p. 349.
 ' When we say one Person is God, we mean, that He is a *divine Hypostasis, Deitatem habens*, as the Schools speak: But when we say God is three Persons, we understand it of the *divine Essence*, or *Substance*: So that the word *God* is sometimes taken essentially, and sometimes personally. Doth this mean that the *Essence* or *Substance* is three Persons? What is meant then by *Deitas* which each Person hath? is not that *Deitas* the *divine Essence* or *Substance*? If we are so far right, it follows, that when we say one Person is God, meaning that he is an *Hypostasis Deitatem habens*, we say one Person hath the *divine Essence* or *Substance*, which *Essence* or *Substance* is *three Persons*. If this be not the Meaning, what else can he mean by the word *God* being taken *Essentially*, but that it sometimes only denotes the abstract *Essence*; as the word *Man* may be sometimes taken *Essentially*, denoting the human Nature as common to all the Individuals?

(*h*) Vid. Waterland Querys p. 389. cited afterwards.

In the mean while they seem willing to be contented with our professing to believe that the *three are one God*, without troubling our Heads with these nice Questions, whether the Union of three Persons should be call'd individual or specifick, whether Person and Being are reciprocal Terms, whether every Person may be properly said to be Self-existent, &c. (i) Is not this in effect to say, Provided you do but receive the Words, it matters not what Notion you have of *One God*, or whether you have any Notion of it at all? It is kind, you will say, to allow us this Liberty. But how should they do otherwise, when they cannot tell themselves what the Unity is that we are to believe (k)? The same great Defender of this Doctrine tells his Antagonists, that he can never fix any certain principle of Individuation. In short, says he, *you know not precisely what it is makes one Being, or one Essence, or one Substance* (l). You see here, they pretend not themselves to know what is *one Being*; do they know then what is *one Person*? Or hath the Scripture said any more of God's being *one Being*, than it hath of his being *one Person*? And if they know not *what it is makes one Being*; how do they know that the three Persons are *but one Being*, and that they are not three Beings? To this Pass are we brought by Mysteries of Man's inventing; and to screen themselves from the Absurdities they are press'd with, we must be run into universal Confusion, and not be able to understand any thing: for this it must come to in its Consequence. But not to pursue this Matter. What I have mentioned, was only with this View, to let

(i) *Waterland's Querys*, p. 322.

(k) *Id.* p. 389. speaking of the Consubstantiality. 'As to the Question, whether it shall be call'd *Specifick*, or *Numerical*, I am in no pain about it. Neither of the Names exactly suits it, nor perhaps any other we can think on. It is such a *Consubstantiality* as preserves the *Unity*, without destroying the *distinct Personality*; such as neither *Sabellians* nor *Arians* would come into, but the *Catholicks* maintain'd, with equal Vigor against both. It is a *Medium* to preserve the *Priority* of the *Father*, and withal the *Divinity*, the *Essential Divinity* of *Son* and *Holy Ghost*. In a word, it is the sober middle way between the Extravagancies of both Extremes.' How happy a Talent is this to be able to make fine Speeches, and all the while say nothing?

(l) Answer to *Whitby*, p. 11.

et you see that they make the *Unity* of God perfectly unintelligible.

But, Sir, can you think, upon reading the Bible, and particularly the New Testament, that the Scriptures have indeed brought such Obscurity upon that which was before the *first and most plain Principle of Natural Religion*? Do you find any where that the Unity of God is represented as an incomprehensible Mystery? or indeed that the Scripture hath made any Alteration in the natural and obvious Notion of it? Is this the great Benefit and Advantage we have by the clear Light of Revelation, to darken, to confound, utterly to destroy the *first plain Principle of Natural Religion*? Our Adversaries may perhaps defend themselves against the Charge of *contradicting* that first Principle, as we observed before; for in Words they still own it: and where there is no Meaning, there cannot properly be a Contradiction. But if we must excuse them from contradicting it; yet we may justly say, they have destroyed, they have rooted out this first Principle. For a Principle, you will own, must be some Notion in the *Mind*: They have left us indeed the Words in our Mouths; but as to any Notion of the Matter, they have taken away the former as springing only from the *Light of Nature*, which, says the learned Writer before refer'd to, is *Darkness in Comparison*; and have not as yet furnished us with any other instead of it; and do almost in so many Words tell us that it is impossible we should have any (m).

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(m) Possibly some may think that our Author's *Simile* may help us in this Distress. He says, *perhaps it may strike some Light upon this sacred Mystery*. But the Light we are to receive from *Similies*, in treating upon this Subject, is generally so inclosed with Cautions not to make too strict Application of them, that commonly one receives but little Advantage from them; for this reason I had almost overlooked it, tho it is twice mentioned. He supposes a *King sending an extraordinary Ambassador, and afterwards leaving a Resident; the Soul of this King united to and acting in and by the Body or Person of the Ambassador and of the Resident*. By the Light of this *Simily*, I should be led to conceive of the one Eternal Being as the Person of the Father, of two other inferior Natures some way united to him, as the Persons of the Son and Spirit. (*Vid.* his Account of Persons, p. 143. and his Supposition, that *as distinct they may not be equal*, p. 128.) If this be our Author's Notion, I think he is himself pretty well

That this is really the Case, that they have quite abolished the former natural Notion of the Unity of God, you easily perceive; and you must confess that hitherto our good Friend hath not been able to help you to a new one. But I would moreover give you a Passage of the learned Defender of this Hypothesis before-mentioned, wherein you may see this whole matter fairly acknowledged, and the Scripture represented as the necessary occasion of it. 'It lies upon you in this case, to prove the Negative, viz. that no Union whatever can make two Persons *one Being, one to God, one God*: You are to show the Supposition to be impossible in the Nature of the Thing: That is (as I humbly conceive) you are to prove what you can know nothing of; and are to work up a Demonstration without *Ideas*.' Is not this to tell us that we have no Idea, either of *two Persons*, or of *one God*? He goes on: 'There the Matter rests, and I am persuaded, must rest, till you please to come out of *Metaphysicks*; and to put the Cause upon the Foot of *Scripture* and *Antiquity*, the only Lights in this Matter. Strange! that at this time of Day, any need to be told (what *Unbelievers* only doubted of formerly) that *Scripture* is our Rule to go by for forming our Notions of God; (might not this Writer much more properly have said here, for forming our *Phrases*, or directing our *Words* when we speak concerning God) and not the Light of Nature, which

well agreed with the *Arians*; for I suppose they make no scruple of allowing some special Union of the Son and Spirit with the blessed God, and that he acts in them and by them. The only Dispute would be about the Use and Signification of the word *God* when applied to them. But I should think that our Author, who is willing to make so great Allowances to the different Schemes among those who call themselves *Trinitarians*, need not be so nice here; Since it is as manifest that he and the *Arians*, according to this Notion, do agree in the Main of the Doctrine, as that the different Schemes of *Trinitarians* do secure and maintain the Substance of the scriptural Doctrine of the Trinity. If this *Simile* do not lead to the *Arian* Notion, it leads to another, which, I am apt to think, many will account as bad, and that is, that the One eternal Being is made up of three Principles of Action, three Understandings and Wills; (*Vid.* his Account of Persons, p. 143.) One perfect, the other Two imperfect. But if any can receive better Light from the *Simile*, I would not be their Hindrance; they may find it set forth at large by our Author, p. 185. and again refer'd to p. 231.

which is darkness in comparison (n)! I am afraid, Sir, that if the Case were indeed, as this Gentleman and his Party have represented it, with respect to the Matter now before us, you and every sensible Man that hath made use of this Reason about Matters of Religion, would be ready to say, *that in comparison of the Light you had by Nature in this great Article, the Scripture is Darkness, impenetrable Darkness.*

I count it a Happiness that I now address my self to one who hath seen our Scriptures in their native Light. I am satisfy'd you will not charge *them* with having thus obscured and altered, and in effect utterly taken away the Notion you had by the Light of Nature, of the one God. You have seen the whole current of Scripture, from beginning to end, speaking of God as one *Person*, and the New Testament plainly declaring who that Person is, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. You have seen, besides all this, express Declarations concerning the *One God*, confining this Title or Character to the Person of the Father. And now, Sir, judge you, whether we may not with as good Grace as our Adversaries, boast of the *obvious Evidence of Scripture*? What Skill, I pray you, and Learning, what *Subtily* and *nice Arts of Distinction* to evade the *Sense of plain Words*, does there need in order to the deducing this Doctrine from Scripture, that the one living and true God is one Person? What think you, may not *Day-labourers and Tradesmen, Children and Servants, of the meanest rank, reading their Bible, naturally be led into the Belief of this*? Which of the two Doctrines is it, that in your Judgment doth appear so *open and clear in the Scripture, that the ignorant and unlearned may read and understand it*? May not we now with good reason say, *The plain Christian who reads his Bible honestly, and follows the natural Meaning of the Words, and I add, the whole strain of Scripture Language, would naturally be led into most dangerous Mistakes by the very Bible it self, if this were to be a principal Article of saving Faith, that Christ and the Spirit are the one God in conjunction with the Father*? Can you persuade your self that God would have let those Passages (the express Declarations) stand in the holy Scriptures as our Rule of Faith and Practice, and have so framed the whole Language of his Word, that it should have such a natural Tendency to appropriate to one Person,

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even the Father, the Dignity of the only true God; and *deceive the humble and simple into such pernicious Snares*, as derogating from the Honour due to the Redeemer and the Holy Spirit, necessarily due, as we hope to obtain Salvation by them? And might we not leave the Matter here? concluding with the Observation of the learned Doctor, whom our Friend quotes in his Preface (o). 'Honest Hearts and common Understandings, whose concern is greater to discern Truth, than to know the multiform Windings of Error, being once convinc'd of the goodness of the Proofs that infer a Doctrine, will be satisfy'd therewith, tho' they be not qualify'd to return an Answer to every Ob-jector: For they well know that Objections must fall, where the Proofs of a Doctrine are clear and conclusive.'

§. 14. However; since the contrary Opinion hath (as we must own) for a considerable Time prevailed among Christians, and is to this Day so zealously contended for by many, whom we cannot but highly value and respect; it may be thought but a point of good Manners to consider what they have to offer in defence of their Assertion. And possibly you your self having heard what our Friend hath produced, may think at first view that there is somewhat of Argument; or however that it would be worth while to clear the plain Doctrine of Scripture from the Dust that hath been raised for so many Ages to obscure it; and to vindicate the sacred Writings from so much as a seeming Inconsistency in a matter of such Importance as one would judge this to be.

We find indeed our Adversaries generally representing their Doctrine as attended with the utmost Evidence. So you have seen our Friend every now and then boasting of *resistless Proofs, strong overbearing Light*, &c. Have they any express Declarations of Scripture, to oppose to those we have brought on the other Side? more plain, more direct, more frequent Assertions, that should oblige us to give another Turn, and to put some kind of Force upon the natural obvious meaning of the Texts we have produc'd in proof of the Father's being the only true God? Not one. Have they the general Style and Language of Scripture to countenance their Opinion in opposition to such express Declarations?

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This, as you have seen, is entirely against them. What then can be Evidence sufficient to bear down the Weight of express Testimony, and this confirmed by the constant Tenor of the Bible, without so much as one Exception? It must all depend upon *Inferences* of their own making; and these *Inferences* you will find, some of them from obscure Prophecies of the Old Testament; some from particular ways of expressing and representing Things used in those Times; some from Accommodation of Passages in the Old Testament to things spoken of in the New; others that may appear to have more colour of Argument, from Titles given to the Person of Christ, which seem in other Places to be appropriated to God. Now let me appeal to you, would you form your Notion of a Doctrine of Christianity from such manner of *Inferences*, or from express Testimonies and Assertions of the New Testament? Where these do appear to clash one with the other, which would you think should give way? Would you be for putting a Force upon the plain, natural Meaning of such Passages? or would you not rather suspect your own Deductions and *Inferences*, supposing that you should meet with some Things which you could not, after all your endeavours, account for to your Satisfaction? But I persuade my self you will not meet with any thing in this Debate, that should bear so hard upon you: Nothing but what we may be able to give such Account of as may satisfy any reasonable Man.

You know, Sir, that our Scriptures were wrote many Ages ago. Part of the Old Testament is undoubtedly the most antient Writing now extant in the World: The latest Book of the New Testament is of above Sixteen hundred Years standing. The Old Testament was originally in *Hebrew*; the New Testament in *Greek*. These could no other way be transmitted to us but by a Succession of Copies. We must then, in the best Method we can, endeavour to understand the Language and manner of Expression, and find the true Reading. And I may suppose, Sir, that the Case being thus, you will not wonder if sometimes we should meet with Difficulties, and that some manners of Expression should now, especially at first View, appear strange to us; or that there should be some different Readings in Copies that have passed through such variety of Hands. If therefore in any Instance we should see occasion to give an Interpretation of the Words differing from their's; or if we should find that other Copies, as many, and of as good Authority as those

they follow, have a Reading different from that upon which they lay the Stress of their Argument; and this different Reading do as perfectly well suit with the Context and Phraseology in other Places; our Author must not think presently to stop our Mouths, with crying out, This is *Criticism*, This is *Art* and *Learning* and *Critical Subtily*: How came we by our Translation? was it not by Skill and Learning in the Languages in which the Originals were written? But must we abide by this Translation, as infallible in every Passage? or must we always be determin'd by the Copy that our Translators followed, and take every Reading to be undoubtedly genuine, because it happens to stand there? You find our Author himself, upon occasion, hath thought fit to give his Readers another Version of some Texts; this he hath thought allowable, when such Sense would more strongly favour his Cause; as particularly that Text in *Jude* ver. 4. which he tells you some learned Men have rendred, *Denying Christ, our only Master, God, and Lord* (p). And that in *Tir.* 2. 13. which he tells us may properly be translated, *The glorious appearing of Jesus Christ our great God and Saviour* (q); tho he doth not pretend that there is any Necessity for that rendring, or so much as any Reason to give it the Preference; unless it may be allow'd for a Reason, that it better serves his Purpose.

Upon the whole, I dare say, you will judge this a reasonable Demand, That we be allow'd by all just and rational Methods, to settle, both the true Reading, and the true Sense of any Text, before we let it pass as an Evidence against us; especially, since they themselves are willing to take the same Liberty, when they think it may be of any Advantage to them. I do not insist so much on this, as if we had so great Occasion for it as you would perhaps imagine, from that great concern our Friend shews to put in his Caveat against such Methods (r); (by which one might be tempted to suspect that they did not much care that their Witnesses should be too strictly examin'd) but to obviate the popular Cry that is sometimes made upon this Occasion. If we shall find it needful to make use of any thing of this Nature, in giving an Answer to some Things he hath produc'd in favour of his Doctrine, it shall be only in such manner, as that any plain honest sensible Person may be capable of judging of the Fairness and Reasonableness of it.

(p) P. 132.

(q) P. 46.

(r) P. 82, 83, & *passim*.

It is true, an unlearned Christian cannot judge whether the rendering of a Text be agreeable to the original Language, or not; this he must take upon trust, as he doth in some sort the whole Translation he makes use of. But taking the Matter of Fact upon Credit, which he may well do when it is agreed on both Sides, that the Words are capable of such rendering; I say, taking this for granted, he may, by the help of common Sense and Understanding, judge as well as another, how far such Text ought to be admitted as evidence in the Cause. In like manner, when it is acknowledged that a Text is doubtful, or that the particular Reading upon which the Stress is laid, is different from what is found in other Copies; tho he do not see the Copies, yet supposing the Thing to be true (which he can have no reason to suspect) he may in this case also judge what Weight is to be laid upon such Passage or such Reading. We shall bring nothing of this Nature as matter of Fact, but what our Adversaries themselves shall allow. And as to the Force of such Considerations, *i. e.* what weight they ought to have in this debate; I hope our Friend will allow every honest Christian to judge of this for himself. So that the *Bulk of common Christians* (such as will venture to exercise their own Judgment in considering this matter, and are desirous of having satisfactory Proof of what they receive as an Article of Faith) need not be terrify'd with the Apprehension of its *needing more Skill and Learning, more Subtilty and nice Arts of Distinction, than they can ever be furnished with*, to reconcile Scripture with the plain Account it gives of the *One God the Father*.

And as to the using *Subtilty and nice Arts of Distinction to evade the plain Sense of Scripture*, I do promise you, Sir, that you shall not meet with any thing of this Nature that is to compare with what our Adversaries are forced to, in their Attempts to reconcile the plain Declarations of the New Testament concerning the *One God*, with their Doctrine of *three Persons*. One would think that they who find themselves so hard put to it, and in such need of *nice Arts of Distinction to evade the Sense of plain Words*, should at least speak more favourably of giving a turn to Expressions that seem positive and direct against them, and be less frequent in their Outcries against such Methods: Unless it be that they imagine, the more they cry out against them, the less they shall be suspected of making use of them, or having any occasion for them.

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There is no doubt but the generality of plain, honest, orthodox Christians do take all to be plain and clear on their Side; even those *Evasions* which the Defenders of Orthodoxy have found out for such Texts as are directly against them: They have been so long us'd to them, that even *these* do now appear natural. Prejudice can do strange things. But as to you, Sir, or any indifferent Person, we would gladly leave it to you to judge between us, upon hearing the whole Debate, which side hath most occasion for *Subtilty and nice Arts of Distinction*, either for the direct Proof of their own Position, or for answering the Objections of the Adversary. If there be any difficulty we cannot get clear of by a fair Method of interpreting Scripture, I do promise you, Sir, for my self, that I will leave it as a Difficulty that I cannot yet account for. This I can do, and still claim the Privilege allow'd by our Friend and the learned Writer he quotes, of adhering to the Doctrine I have embrac'd, *being convinc'd of the goodness of the Proofs that do infer it; and being satisfy'd therewith; tho I am not qualify'd, as yet, to return an Answer to every Objector; well knowing that Objections must fall where the Proofs of a Doctrine are clear and conclusive.*

S. 15. I believe, Sir, you begin to think it high Time that we enter upon our Friend's Arguments. But I must entreat your Patience once more, while I take notice of his Reply to a Plea or Excuse that he supposes some might be ready to make for their not receiving his Doctrine. In short, they would plead *Want of sufficient Evidence* (s). I might pass this, and the Reply to it, were it not for the Encouragement it may seem to give to that uncharitable Censure that is common among the Zealots of his Party. It is usual with them to represent those who do not receive their Notions, as guilty of that *inward Pride and Obstinacy of Mind, which is highly criminal in the Sight of God, and which, there is reason to fear, he will terribly resent in the other World.* It must be owned, our Author doth not charge this upon all who would make the Excuse above-mentioned: his manner of speaking here is vastly different from what you will find in some other Writers of the Party, who make no difficulty of pronouncing all that do not embrace their Doctrine, obstinate Hereticks, doom'd to *perish everlastingly, except God* give

give them Grace to repent of their *wicked Error*. What our good Friend says upon this occasion, looks more like a kind Warning and Admonition, than a direct Charge or pronouncing Sentence. However, since the furious Zeal of others may be ready to take hold of what is here suggested, as countenancing them in their rash Censures: give me leave to make one short Remark upon our Author's Reply to these Objectors; and then I shall, without any more delay, enter upon the consideration of his Arguments.

He tells these Objectors, ' They would do well to ask themselves solemnly, as in the sight of God, *Whether or no they should not think these Doctrines plainly and sufficiently reveal'd, if they could but reconcile them by Reason to their own Satisfaction?* If so, then 'tis plain that the Impediment of Belief does not lie in the want of Evidence, but in faulty Prejudices and reluctance of the Mind, because of the Inability of our Reason to comprehend what is reveal'd.' I am afraid the Principle here laid down will carry the Censure much farther than our Author would like of. May not the *Church of Rome*, upon this Principle, charge our Author and his Protestant Brethren with *Pride and Obstinacy of Mind* for rejecting her Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*? Would you not think it, says the Defender of Transubstantiation, *plainly and sufficiently reveal'd*, that the Bread in the Eucharist is the very Body, and the Wine the very Blood of Christ, *could you but reconcile it by Reason to your own Satisfaction?* Have you any thing in the Bible so express for your Doctrine of the Trinity as we have for this Doctrine of our Church? Hath not Christ said in so many Words, *This is my Body*? Is it not plain then that the *Impediment of Belief* doth not lie in want of Evidence, but in faulty Prejudices and reluctance of the Mind, because of the inability of our Reason to comprehend what is reveal'd? Now, if you will not submit to receive this sacred Truth, merely because you cannot reconcile it by Reason to your own Satisfaction; you have some ground to suspect your self guilty of that inward Pride and Obstinacy of Mind, which is highly criminal in the Sight of God. And whether the great God will not terribly resent in the other World these faulty Prejudices, this naughtiness of Mind, this unbelief of Truths so plainly reveal'd, is a Thought that should make you tremble. If our Author would not be frightened by all the Solemnity of such an Address, from putting another Interpretation upon the Words of our Saviour, *This is my Body*, than that absurd Sense

Sense of the *Romanists*; let him think, that whatever he may say to discharge himself from the guilt of that *inward Pride and Obstinacy of Mind*—— in rejecting their absurd Doctrine; the same may another say, who doth not embrace those Doctrines our Author contends for, *because he doth not see them written with sufficient Evidence in the Bible*. Pray take notice, I don't here set these two Doctrines upon a Level: I only observe from this Instance, that our Friend would not be willing to be judged by his own Rule: And that he himself must allow, that a Person might possibly think a Doctrine sufficiently reveal'd, if he could but by Reason reconcile it to his own Satisfaction; but upon that very account, because he cannot by Reason reconcile it to his own Satisfaction, may think it not sufficiently reveal'd, and consequently not receive it; and yet this be no just ground for suspecting himself guilty of *inward Pride, &c.*

The truth is, however Men may sometimes think it convenient to exclaim against *Reason*; they themselves will in their Turn shew the same regard to Reason, and make use of it in their interpreting Scripture. I might ask our Author, whether he would not think it plainly and sufficiently reveal'd in Scripture, that God hath *Bodily Members*, or *Passions* like to us, &c. if he could but reconcile these Notions by Reason to his own Satisfaction? How often do we read of the *Hand* of God, of the *Arm* of the Lord, of his *Eyes*, and his *Ears*? how expressly is it said, that it repented God that he had made Man, and that it grieved him at the Heart? how often is he said to be full of *Wrath* and *Fury*, &c.? In short, the Question comes to no more than this, whether we should not take the Words of any Text in their literal and strict Sense, if there were nothing in the Nature of things, or in the Context, or in other places of Scripture, that did oblige us to take them otherwise?

Or if our Author would confine his Remark only to our own Reasoning from the Nature of Things; it will affect us no more than it does him. He will own that a contradictory Proposition is not to be believed in the literal Sense. Neither Reason, says he, nor Religion can require us to believe plain Inconsistency (t). Until they give me such a Sense of their Doctrine as is to me free from Contradiction and Inconsistency, I am under a Necessity of believing that it is not reveal'd

(t) P. 166.

reveal'd in Scripture. But neither is this all; we think the Scripture doth abundantly declare the contrary, and therefore 'tis impossible we should at the same time believe their Doctrine to be sufficiently reveal'd. And consequently we are obliged, out of regard to the Scripture, (not from a *naughtiness of Mind*, in opposing our own Reason to divine Revelation) to put a Sense upon some Texts, different from that which they take to be most natural and obvious. This is no more than what they themselves do, and indeed all parties whatsoever, when the strict literal Meaning of the Words doth appear to them to be an Absurdity, or to be inconsistent with what they judge to be sufficiently proved from other places of Scripture. We may now, I hope, without incurring the Censure of *Pride and Obstinacy of Mind*, &c. own that we do not believe, notwithstanding all our Author hath said, that this Doctrine he so earnestly contends for, is sufficiently revealed in Scripture; and that we do not look upon his Arguments to be such *resistless proofs* as he takes them to be.

§. 16. We need not enter into a Debate with our Author concerning the general Truth of his *fourth, fifth and sixth Propositions*, which are preliminary to the particular Arguments to be produc'd from Scripture: No doubt there are *evident marks of Distinction between God and a Creature*. We may very well believe, that *God is so jealous of his own Honour, as never to suffer these to be ascribed to any other besides himself*. And we own with our Author in his *sixth Proposition*, that *God is so kind and faithful to his Creatures, as to tell them what are these peculiar and distinguishing Characters, that they may not run into this Mistake and Guilt of ascribing them to any other*. But then I would observe upon the whole of this matter, that it concerns us to understand those Things which may be appropriated as distinguishing Characters of the true God, in their proper Sense, *i. e.* in that sense which is evidently designed when they are appropriated to God. And let not our Author think, we lay in this Remark, only to serve as a Foundation for some Evasions, that we may have occasion for in accounting for those Passages of Scripture he hath produc'd. I desire no more by this, than what any sensible Man shall allow to be reasonable, upon comparing other places of Scripture, and considering the nature of Things; no more than what they themselves in the general must allow.

Can they deny but that some Things are spoken of as peculiar to God, which yet in a more general Sense of the Words, do belong to others, *e. g.* When it is said, *None is good but one, that is God*; when he is described as *only wise*; when it is said, *Thou only art holy*; that he is the *only Potentate*; that he *only hath Immortality*; that he *only is to be feared*. What! do these Characters of *good*, of *wise*, of *holy*, of *immortal*, so belong to him, as that whenever we find any called good, or holy, or wise, or any one said to be immortal, we must conclude it is *God* that is spoken of? or that, when we meet with the Title of *Potentate*, or read of any who is to be feared, we must presently conclude, *this is God*? Well then, what must we say when we find these things appropriated to God? or what do they say to it? Indeed the common Sense of Mankind is satisfy'd about it: No one makes any difficulty of it. They understand by it, that Goodness, Wisdom, &c. in the most absolute perfect manner, and in their Original, do belong to God; that He only is of himself absolutely good, wise, &c. In like manner, as to the very Name and Title of *God*, it cannot be deny'd but this is given to others; when yet God so solemnly declares, *I am God, and there is none else: there is no God besides me*. What can this mean? why plainly this, that there is no other who is God, in the proper, highest, and most absolute Sense of the Word. Our Author himself hath taken notice of this, he confesses that *the word God is used sometimes in the Bible in a figurative, and in a limited or imperfect Sense (u)*; and therefore, when it is applied peculiarly to the true God, it must of consequence be understood in the most perfect absolute and unlimited Sense. We own now with our Author, that *the Blessed God in great Condescension, hath told us in his Word, what are the peculiar Glories that belong to his Nature, and the Characters by which he will be known and distinguished from all that is not God; (i. e. from all that is not himself) and that he hath been so kind and faithful to his People, as to mark out these distinguishing Characters of Godhead, by which he will be known, in so evident a manner, that they may not thoughtlessly run into this heinous Mistake of ascribing Godhead (i. e. his peculiar Godhead, and the Glory that is peculiar to himself) to any inferior*

(u) P. 22.

rior Natures, and incur the dreadful Penalties which his Jealousy hath threatned.

In short, Sir, the Matter comes to this: if we make it appear, that notwithstanding any thing that is attributed in Scripture to *Christ*, or to the *Spirit*, God the *Father* hath taken sufficient care, both in the Old Testament and in the New, to secure to himself the Glory that is peculiarly due to him, as in the most absolute Sense, the *One true God*; our Author's Arguments will be found destitute of that which himself hath laid as the sole Foundation of them.

He will say, perhaps, The contrary to what we would pretend, appears by the Event: The distinguishing Characters of Godhead have not been in so evident a manner marked out in Scripture, as to prevent the People of God from thoughtlessly running into this heinous Mistake of ascribing Godhead to any inferior Natures, if their Doctrine be not true; since in fact such Multitudes of Christians have ascribed *Supreme Godhead* to two other Persons besides him. But this hath in good part been obviated already in the Answer we have given to our Friend's *Moral Argument*. Besides what hath been there said as to the Fact it self, we are to consider, that God was not obliged to express himself in such manner as to leave no possibility of mistaking and running into Error, even in points of Importance. It is enough, if his Word be so plain, as that an honest Enquirer in the Exercise of a proper Diligence and becoming Attention may come to a right Knowledge of the Doctrine of Scripture. This all Parties must own. Will our Adversaries say, that God could not have expressed their Doctrine more clearly? Could he not have given us positive direct Assertions of it, and have guarded them by as positive express Condemnations of the contrary Error? But what need we insist on a Matter which no Man will pretend seriously to deny? Who will venture to say, that God did design to take all the Care he might or could have done to prevent any Mistakes, or that he was obliged to do so? It is enough, if he hath expressed himself in such manner as that any Man of common Sense and Understanding, coming to the Word without prejudice, and giving due heed to it, may perceive the important Truths designed to be conveyed by it. And thus I take the Case to be in the Matter now before us; as he hath every where throughout the whole Bible settled the Notion of the One God, as he hath plainly described his Excellencies and Perfections, as he hath demanded for himself a peculiar Ho-

nour and Glory; so there is nothing in his Word that would naturally, much less that must necessarily, lead any serious diligent Enquirer into heinous Mistakes about this important Matter.

If we take the *Old Testament*, our Adversaries do generally grant that this did not lead the *Jews* into the Knowledge of this Doctrine. So our Author, *The antient Jews and Patriarchs might be saved without an explicit Knowledge of the divine Persons, because they were not clearly reveal'd (w)*. It cannot therefore be deny'd, but that God did sufficiently in his Faithfulness and Kindness secure them from the *heinous Mistake of ascribing Godhead to any inferior Nature*. If we take the *New Testament*, take that by it self, I may venture to say, that it doth no less plainly appropriate a *peculiar Honour* to the Father, than the *Old Testament* doth; and there is no more danger from any thing said in the *New Testament* concerning Christ, of any one's being led to take him for the *only true God*, than there is from what we read in the *Old Testament*. And truly, considering the many Proofs that our Author, with other Defenders of this Doctrine, produces from the *Old Testament*, one would be sometimes ready to think, that this Doctrine was in reality more clearly reveal'd in the *Old Testament* to the *Jews*, than in the *New* to Christians. (We may, perhaps, take notice of some Instances to confirm this Remark, when we come to the particular Arguments.) But I must desire you to observe, that I speak this only of the *Old Testament* and of the *New*, taken singly or separately by themselves; as suppose that you had only the *Old Testament* in your Country, and another Person only the *New Testament* in his Country; according to the usual Method of proving this Doctrine, I don't know but that an ingenious Trinitarian, well skill'd in the Controversy, might more easily prove his Doctrine to you out of the *Old Testament* alone, than he could to the other out of the *New Testament* by it self. If this Supposition be true, it will follow, that as the *Jews* were not *inevitably* led to this Notion by their Scriptures; so neither would the *Christian* by his Scriptures: And consequently, that in the *New Testament* as well as in the *Old*, the One true God hath taken sufficient Care to distinguish himself from every other Being, and to appropriate to himself

self a peculiar Honour, a Glory that he doth not give unto another.

I expect it will be reply'd, However it is enough, if we who have both, by comparing the one with other, do plainly find that this is the Doctrine of the Bible. It is granted that the New Testament hath a manifest Reference to the Old, and doth suppose the Truth of it. And if so be that in the New Testament we should find any Interpretation of Passages in the Old, as carrying in them a Sense which we should not have found out of our selves in reading the Old Testament, we should be obliged to receive such Interpretations as true and genuine. And particularly with reference to the Matter now in debate; had we been told in the New Testament that such Passages in the Old did intimate to us, that *Christ* the Son of God so much spoken of in the Gospel, was the *same one God* who had made himself known to the *Jews*, we should be obliged to submit to its Authority. But this is not the Case, 'tis not the *Apostles* that tell us this, but these Gentlemen by their reasoning from some Passages cited by the sacred Writers of the New Testament do infer this. So that neither have we this way an explicit Revelation of this Doctrine; 'tis after all, at best, but only implied in *both taken together*, and left to be *drawn out*, as our Author expresses it in his *Preface*.

Now if this be not the explicit Doctrine either of the *Old Testament* by it self, or of the *New* by it self; and there would be no danger of the *People of God's being led into dangerous Mistakes* about this Matter, were it not for Inferences that we draw from some Passages in the Old Testament, as cited and applied in the New; we have very good Reason to suspect those Inferences, when they tend to destroy that Distinction which would otherwise appear to be sufficiently secured in both; especially if we add to this, that the Distinction hath been explicitly declared, and expressly secured by frequent Passages in those sacred Writings. And in truth there will need no more to preserve any one (not already prejudic'd) from such *heinous Mistake*, but only to exercise common Sense and Reason in reading the Word of God: And this God supposes when he speaks to Men. If in one place he seems to appropriate to himself, what in other places is attributed to others; it is supposed that any Reader of common Understanding will immediately perceive, that such Things must in their highest Sense belong to him, tho in a lower and more general Sense they may belong to others: and there

there could be no danger, that upon finding those Things attributed to others, Men should immediately take those others for God himself, and worship them *instead of the true God*. He might expect, that when he sends a Book into the World for the Instruction of Mankind, he should be allow'd, if I may so speak, the common Equity that is due to all Writers; that he should be understood to speak consistently with himself, and his Words be interpreted according to the Ways and Manners of speaking that were us'd in those Times among them, with whom the Pen-men of these Scriptures did converse, and to whom they were first given. With such Allowances as these, which you and every sensible Man must own to be just and equitable, we doubt not but to make it appear that the Bible, both the Old Testament and the New, whether separately or conjunctly, have taken sufficient Care to preserve to the Father, the only true God, the distinguishing Marks of Godhead, and to prevent any Danger of his own People being led into so dangerous Error as the giving to another all that Honour and Glory, which it is the very Design of his Word to appropriate and reserve to himself.

§. 17. Our Author reckons up the *peculiar and distinguishing Characters of Godhead, which God hath assumed to himself in his Word, exclusive of any other Being*, under these following Heads, his *Names, Titles, Attributes, Works, and Worship*. These very *Names, Titles, Attributes, Works, and Worship, which are peculiar to God, and incommunicable to another, are*, says our Author, *ascribed to Three by God himself in his Word* (x). I might make a short Answer to this, only referring you to what hath been already taken notice of, viz. That the Scripture, even in those Places where God doth assume these peculiar distinguishing Characters to himself, exclusive of any other Being; I say, in those very Places, and every where else, the Scripture speaks of *one Person only*; that in this it is most clear and express according to the universal Use of all Language, when it intends one single Person. If therefore we will allow the Scripture to speak intelligibly, and make it consistent with it self; we must, when we find these Things attributed to some other Person, understand them in a more general Sense; and conceive of them as being only

(x) *Propos. 7. p. 35, &c.*

only in the highest and most absolute Sense appropriated to God: which, as we have seen, is no more than what they themselves in several Instances are forced to allow. And since we have repeated Instances of this in the Word of God, and the Thing it self is so reasonable and so obvious, we may say that God himself hath plainly enough shewed us how to escape the *Snares*, and avoid the *Danger of being led into any pernicious Mistakes* by any such Representations of himself.

However, for your Satisfaction, I will follow our Author, and consider all these *distinguishing Characters*, and see how they are appropriated to God, and how far they may appear to be attributed to Christ and to the *Holy Spirit*. He begins with the *Names of God* (y). The first he mentions is *Jehovah*, which, as he supposes, *from the very Composition of the Word must be esteemed a Name peculiar to God, as denoting Being it self*. But besides this, he observes, that there are most express *Scriptures which prove the Name Jehovah to be incommunicable*. As to the first Text quoted for this Purpose, *Psal. 83. 18. I might observe to you, that the Words may full as well, if not more agreeably to the Original, be rendered, Thou whose Name is Jehovah, thou alone art most high*. But he may spare this, having two other Texts to confirm this Position; one in *Isa. 45. 5. I am Jehovah, and there is none else*. Observe what follows; *There is no GOD besides me*: So frequently in that Prophecy, *I am GOD, and there is none else*. Will not these latter Expressions prove as well that the Title of *God* is incommunicable, as the former that the Title of *Jehovah* is so? Yet notwithstanding any such Declarations, we find the Title of *God* attributed to others; what necessity is there then from those words to conclude that the Name *Jehovah* may not also in a self perfect Sense be given to another? As he is *God*, and there is none else besides him; none that is *God*, as he is *God*; so he is *Jehovah*, and there is none besides him; none other that is *Jehovah* in that strict absolute Sense in which the Name belongs to him. If therefore our Friend should be able to produce some Texts where this Name is applied to the Person of *Christ*, there would be no necessity of inferring from thence that he is the *One true God*.

But what if it should appear from the next Passage our Author brings for the Proof of this Name being incommunicable, that

that it is the *Person of the Father* that speaks there, that it must be understood of Him exclusive of the Son? If so, our Friend must either give up those Texts where he imagines that he finds this incommunicable Name applied to the *Person of Christ*; or else he must grant, that notwithstanding such Expressions, this Name is not so absolutely incommunicable, but that it may in a Sense be given to another *besides Him* unto whom it might seem by such Expressions to be appropriated. Now, Sir, do but read the preceding part of that 42d Chap. of *Isa.* It will appear evident to a Demonstration, according to our Author's own way of arguing, that it *must be the Person of the Father*, as distinguished from Christ; that it is, I say, the Father singly and solely who speaks those Words, *I am Jehovah*, &c. and consequently, that if that Name be appropriated and be absolutely incommunicable, it excludes every other Person. Read that Chapter, and if you don't find as plain Evidence that the Father *must be the Person meant here*, as any our Author hath produc'd to prove that *Christ must be the Person meant by Jehovah in that Title of Jehovah our Righteousness*; I will be content to give up the Cause.

He argues thus: 'Tis evident, that this Name [*Jehovah our Righteousness*] is not ascribed to *Christ*, as the name *Jehovah Nissi* is given to an Altar, or *Jehovah Shalom*, or as the name *Jehovah Shammah* is given to a City: because 'tis possible in all those Places that *God the Father* may be signified. But *Christ* must be the Person meant in these Words; for it is a Promise concerning the Times of the New Testament, where *Christ* is often described as our *Righteousness*, but *God the Father* is never described so, *1 Cor. 1. 30. Christ Jesus is made unto us Wisdom and Righteousness* (2). This is an Argument much like that we had before for applying to *Christ* the Doxology in *Jude*, *Unto God our Saviour*. Our Saviour is a special Title of *Christ*, therefore the Title of *God our Saviour* must mean him; whereas it appears that in several places *God our Saviour* is undeniably meant of the Father. It is true, *Christ is made to us Righteousness*; but is it not there said, that he is made so to us of *God*? *God made him to be Sin for us, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him*. He is made unto us *Sanctification* as well as *Righteousness*, must there-

Therefore Christ be the Person meant whenever we read of him that sanctifies? No doubt it may as truly be said that he is made to us *Salvation*, as it is said that he is made to us *Redemption*; might we thence have inferred, that wherever we find the Saints applying to God as *their Salvation* in the Old Testament, or meet with the Title of *God our Saviour* in the New, that Christ must be the Person meant in those Words? We may then, very consistently with what we read in the New Testament, understand by *Jehovah* in this Title *God the Father*; as in those other Titles, *Jehovah Nissi*, &c. 'Tis possible, says our Author, that in all those places *God the Father* may be signified. And to say I, it is possible that in this place *God the Father* may be signified; inasmuch as God hath in Christ opened a Way for our obtaining Righteousness, and we are made *the Righteousness of God in him*. We may the more easily admit this, inasmuch as we find this Name given also to the Church, *Jer. 33. 16. This is the Name wherewith she shall be called, Jehovah our Righteousness*; which is exactly parallel with those other Names, *Jehovah Nissi*, &c. The Church shall be called *Jehovah our Righteousness*, inasmuch as God shall be seen and known in her as a God justifying Sinners, making them who were Sin his Righteousness in Christ. Judge now, whether our Author hath made out his Point, and whether this be a *refutable Proof* of the Name *Jehovah* being ascribed to Christ.

And now, Sir, let me propose to you the Evidence there is that the Person speaking in this 42d Chap. of *Isa.* must be the Person of the Father, and cannot be understood of the Person of Christ. There needs no more but to recite the Words; only observing to you, that it is agreed by all that it is Christ who is here prophesied of as *God's Servant* and his *Elect*, &c. Now hear the whole Passage. *Behold my Servant whom I uphold, mine Elect in whom my Soul delighteth: I have put my Spirit upon him, he shall bring forth Judgment to the Gentiles.— Thus said God the Lord, He that created the Heavens and stretched them out, — I Jehovah have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a Covenant of the People, for a Light of the Gentiles. — I am Jehovah, that is my Name, and my Glory will I not give unto another.* Who is it, I pray you, that says this? is it possible that any other can be signified but *God the Father*? Doth

Christ say, *Behold my Servant* ? &c. Is Christ included in this *Jehovah*, who says, *I Jehovah have called thee in righteousness* ? &c. Is it the Spirit says, *Behold my Servant* — *I will put my Spirit upon him* ? Well then, if this be the Father speaking in his own Person singly ; I say in his own Person, so as that it is not possible that any other should be included or supposed as in Conjunction with him ; why then truly if this Name be absolutely appropriated by this Declaration, it is so appropriated to the Person of the Father ; it is his sole distinguishing Character, and he will not give his Glory to any other Person. Here I hope you are satisfy'd that we have no need of *critical Subtily*, of *Skill and Learning*, and *nice Arts of evading the obvious Sense of plain Words*.

But let us see what Account our Adversaries will give of this and the like Passages of Scripture. We ask, who is it that speaks in this Prophecy ? Some do own that it is a Person who speaks in the Old Testament ; but then they say he is to be consider'd as including, or as in Conjunction with, the Two other Persons. This you will think a strange way of Interpreting ; I should think it rather a way of confounding all Language, as hath been hinted before. However let us bring this Interpretation to the Passage before us. *Behold my Servant whom I uphold* : My Servant *Christ*, whom I [the Father, together with my Son Christ and my Spirit] do uphold : *Mine elect* [chosen by us three, the Father, the Son and the Spirit] *I have put my Spirit upon him* [we three, Father, Son and Spirit, have put our Spirit upon him] (6). I need not go on, I suppose you have enough. Others it may be will think they may come off better by understanding such Passages as these not of a Person but of the *Essence* ; as

(6) Dr. Waterland says, (*Serm. p. 132.*) that *We are to understand the Term [God] in the Old Testament of the Father singly, not exclusively, but in conjunction with the Son.* How to understand a Term of one Person singly (or by himself) in conjunction with another Person, I must own to be above my Reach. But how nice and delicate soever this Notion may be (for I may suppose that the Doctor hath some Notion of it, tho I have none) I will venture to say that it will not help him out here. For the Person who speaks here singly concerning the Son, cannot be understood to speak this in conjunction with the Son ; this must be understood of the Father exclusively, as well as singly.

we were told that the Term *Father* is often to be understood, not of the Person so call'd, but of the divine Essence absolutely consider'd. This we may suppose to be our Author's Notion; because from hence he would prove, that Christ having the Name *Jehovah*, hath of consequence Communion in the *Godhead*, and is not another Being. This perhaps you will think no less strange than the other. For who would imagine in hearing one speak thus, *I am Jehovah*, &c. that this must be taken to be the Words, not of a Person, but of an abstract Essence? But let us see, if you please, how this will suit with the Text. *Behold my Servant whom I uphold* [I the Godhead, in which Godhead we three, the Father, the Son who is this Servant, and the Spirit, have Communion] *mine Elect in whom my Soul* [the Soul of me the Godhead] *delighteth.* I [the Godhead] have put my Spirit [the Spirit of me the Godhead] upon him. You may take which of these Interpretations you please. I can think of no other Turn that can be given to the Words to make them support their Notion. Is this the plain, natural, and obvious Sense of Scripture, which our Author seems so much to plead for, and so often boasts of? If you, Sir, can think it so, then be his Profelyte,

§. 18. Having prov'd to you that the Father must be the Person who speaks those Words, *I am Jehovah*, &c. that it is He singly and solely that speaks in that Prophecy; I would proceed a little farther upon this Point; and demonstrate to you that it is the Father who is meant throughout the Old Testament by the LORD GOD, the GOD of *Israel*, in opposition to the Gods of the Nations. I chuse to settle this Point now once for all; because I may often have occasion to recur to it in replying to our Friend's Arguments from Scripture.

You have seen, with all the Evidence that I think any Matter can receive from the constant use of words in all Languages, that God is always spoken of as one Person. That which I now propose, is to give you some plain Demonstrations that in many places the Lord God must mean the Person of the Father; whence we may conclude that He is the Person spoken of in other places, and particularly that it is He who so frequently declares himself to be the true God, and asserts that there is none besides him. We shall trace the Evidence of this thro the Books

of *Moses*, and shew that it is entirely confirmed by the Writers of the New Testament.

I shall begin with that very Passage which our Adversaries sometimes produce as a Proof (or an Intimation at least) of a Plurality of Persons in the Godhead. *God said, let Us make Man.* If it be granted that we are to understand here some other Person or Persons to whom God speaks; since all are agreed that those other Persons are the *Son* and the *Spirit*, it plainly follows that by GOD in this Passage, must be understood the Person of the Father; and so it will appear that in *Moses's* Account of the Creation GOD means the *Father*. And this is agreeable to what we find in the New Testament, where we are told that *God created all things by Jesus Christ*, Eph. 3. 9. and in *Heb. 1. 2.* that *God made the Worlds by his Son*: Pray observe the manner of Expression in both those Texts: I think it plainly appears, not only that the Father did create all Things by Christ, but farther, that by GOD whom the Old Testament speaks of as the Creator of Heaven and Earth, they understood the Person of the Father; I say the Father singly and solely. *To make all Men see what is the fellowship of the Mystery, which from the beginning was hid in GOD, who created all things by Jesus Christ. GOD who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in times past to the Fathers by the Prophets, hath in these last times spoken to us by his Son——by whom HE made the Worlds.* Now if GOD the Maker of Heaven and Earth, spoken of in the 1st Chap. of *Gen.* be meant of the Person of the Father, we may very conclude that he is the Person meant every where else, when *Moses* speaks of the LORD GOD in his Writings.

But take another Instance, *The Lord God said to the Serpent, I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed; it shall break thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.* It is universally agreed amongst Christians that this Seed of the Woman is *Christ*, and that this is (tho in obscure Expressions) the first Promise of *Christ*. If so, must we not conclude that the *Lord God* who speaks here is the Person of the Father?

We have a very particular account of God's calling *Abraham*, and entering into Covenant with him; let us see what we may gather with reference to the Person or Persons included in or meant by the Term *God*, from this History of God's transacting with *Abraham*. Truly, Sir,

I cannot help thinking that our present Enquiry must appear to you very odd and out of the way (I hope our good Friend will pardon me for saying so) no doubt you understood by *Jehovah* who spake unto *Abraham*, the true God, the Maker of Heaven and Earth, according to the Notion you always had of God, as one intelligent Agent. I can scarce imagine that in your reading this History you had ever a Thought of three Persons being the God of *Abraham*, *Jehovah* himself, the *Angel* of *Jehovah*, and the *Spirit* of *Jehovah* (tho I don't find indeed that our Author insists upon this Title of the God of *Abraham* being given to the *Spirit*, however according to their Hypothesis he is included.) But since (as you have seen) this is what some plead for, such an Enquiry, however odd it may seem to you, is now become necessary. Well then, who is the Person or Persons that gave the Promises to *Abraham*? If you will be content with the Account that the *Apostles* give of him, and can take up with their Notion, you may rest satisfy'd, that it was the Person of the Father that was meant by the Lord God Almighty, who called *Abraham*, and gave him the Promises. Thus *St. Peter* understood it, thus *St. Paul* understood it. You may remember the Words of *St. Peter* to the *Jews* (*Acts* 3.) *The God of Abraham, &c. hath glorified his Son Jesus.*—*Ye are the Children of the Prophets, and of the Covenant which GOD made with our Fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy Seed shall all the Nations of the Earth be blessed. Unto you first GOD having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you. St. Paul (Acts 13.) We declare unto you glad Tidings, how that the Promise which was made unto the Fathers, GOD hath fulfilled the same unto us their Children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son. The same is supposed in all the Discourse of this Apostle concerning Abraham's Justification, in the 4th Chapt. to the Rom. Abraham believed GOD, and it was accounted to him for Righteousness,*—*Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him, but for us also to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. See also the 3d Chap. to the Galat. there it will still more evidently appear that the Father must be the Person meant by GOD, who made Covenant with Abraham: for Christ is consider'd as the principal Party to whom the Promise was made; and the*

the Covenant with *Abraham* and Believers is called the Covenant confirmed of God in Christ. Now to *Abraham* and his Seed were the Promises made. He saith not, And to Seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy Seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the Covenant which was confirmed before of GOD in Christ [or by God unto Christ] — Whether now you will take our Author's Opinion, or be content with that of the *Apostles*, I must leave to your Choice, Or if you can reconcile them, and make them consist together, you may take both, i. e. if you can suppose that by GOD making Promise to Christ, is meant Christ making promise to Christ; or, Father, Son and Spirit, making promise to Christ; or that by the Covenant confirmed of God in Christ, is meant the Covenant confirmed of Christ in Christ. For our Author tells us (c) that Christ was the Lord who appeared to *Abraham* in Vision, Gen. 15. (consequently he must be the Person who justified *Abraham* upon his believing, v. 6.) that it was Christ who said, I am the Almighty God, &c. Gen. 17. and then established his Covenant with him. Whether our Author hath better Reasons for his Opinion than the *Apostles* had for theirs, we shall see by and by. I shall at present only represent to you the plain Account from Scripture, and the Notion that the *Israelites* of old and the *Apostles* afterwards appear to have had of this Matter.

The next remarkable Period of God's manifesting himself (which I shall take notice of) was his appearing to *Moses*, and giving the Law at *Mount Sinai*. We read in *Exod. 3.* of an *Angel of the Lord* appearing to *Moses*. One would think the Expression it self would naturally lead the Reader to understand by this *Angel of Jehovah*, some other Being, and not *Jehovah* himself. But they insist on the following words, And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the Bush. But what necessity is there of inferring from thence, that the Angel who was mention'd before, was *Jehovah* the God who here speaks to *Moses*? 'tis but to suppose that God himself was there, and the Angel with him as an Attendant; and this whole Matter will appear very easy and intelligible. And if you look into the Account that *St. Stephen* the first Christian Martyr gives of this Appearance

ance of God to *Moses*, (*Acts 7.*) you will find that he understood it so. There appeared to him in the Wilderness an Angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a Bush. When *Moses* saw it, he wondered at the Sight; and as he drew near to behold it, the Voice of the Lord came to him, saying, *I am, &c.* He doth not say, The Angel said to him, *I am the God of thy Fathers, &c.* as our Author would have it, but the Voice of the Lord came to him. And afterwards you see that he manifestly distinguishes the Angel from God, even as a Messenger sent and employ'd by God who spake to *Moses*, ver. 35. This *Moses* whom they refused—the same did God send by the hand of the Angel which appeared to him in the Bush. You may observe as manifest Distinction in the Writings of *Moses* himself. Was not he who said to *Moses*, *Exod. 23. 20.* Behold I send an Angel before thee to keep thee in the way—Beware of him and obey his Voice, provoke him not: for he will not pardon your Transgressions, for my Name is in him. Was not he, I say, who speaks these Words the same Person who called to *Moses* out of the Bush, and said, *I am the God of thy Fathers, &c.* Now according to our Author, this Angel whom God promised to send before them must be Christ, because God says here, *My Name is in him (d).* If that be an Argument that the Angel here spoken of is the Person of Christ, then I hope it is plain that the Person who says here, *I will send mine Angel, beware how you provoke him, for my Name is in him,* cannot be the Person of Christ, but must be the Person of the Father. See to the same purpose *Numb. 20. 16.* When we cried to *Jehovah*, he heard our Voice, and sent an Angel, and hath brought us out of Egypt. No doubt He who spake to *Moses* at the Bush, and who spake to him in the Mount, promising to send his Angel, &c. was the same Person as spake also to the whole Congregation, saying, *I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of Egypt, &c.* Now in *St. Paul's* Apprehension this was the Father. You will be satisfy'd of this, if you look into *Gal. 3.* which we before refer'd to. It was the Person who had made the Promise to *Abraham* and his Seed, which was Christ; he afterwards brought in the Law, and it was added, says the Apostle, because of Transgressions,

on, till the Seed should come to whom the Promise was made; and it was ordained by Angels in the hand of a Mediator. Now a Mediator is not of one, but God is one. But doth not the whole New Testament every where suppose this, that it was the Father who gave the Law at Mount Sinai?

I shall take notice but of one Passage more in the Writings of Moses, Deut. 18. 15, &c. The LORD thy GOD will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken. According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy GOD in Horeb in the day of the Assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the Voice of the LORD my GOD—And the LORD said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their Brethren like unto thee, and will put my Words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my Name, I will require it of him. We are all agreed that this Prophet is Christ himself. Judge now whether the Father must not be the Person meant by the LORD their GOD, who spake to them in Horeb; whether Moses and the Israelites at that Time did not understand it so; and whether St. Peter and the Jews in his Time were not of the same Mind. See the place referred to, Acts 3. latter end.

We might very well stop here. You will readily suppose, that if the Father be the Person meant by GOD who created the Heaven and the Earth; by the Lord God who passed Sentence upon our first Parents for their Disobedience; by the Lord God Almighty, who called Abraham, and enter'd into Covenant with him, to be his God and the God of his Seed; by the Lord God, who brought the People of Israel out of Egypt, and gave them the Law at Mount Sinai; you will easily conclude, I say, that it is the same Person who is meant by the Style and Character in the following Writings of the Old Testament. I fear you would think me tedious; otherwise I would refer you to a Multitude of Passages in the Psalms and in the Prophets, that would abundantly confirm this Conclusion. In many Passages, for instance, in the Prophecy of Isaiah, you will perceive by the Circumstances of the Place that the Father must be the Person meant.

And may we not suppose that it is the same Person that is intended all along by the *Lord God* who speaks in that Prophecy? So that it appears to be the constant Strain of the *Old Testament*, as you have seen before that it is of the *New*, to mean by *GOD* absolutely speaking, the Person of the Father.

But indeed it were enough, if we could but show that in any one of those places where we meet with these *distinguishing Characters*, the Father must be the Person meant. And this we have particularly demonstrated, with reference to the Passage cited by our Author from *22 Chap. Isa.* If this be evident (and I don't see after what hath been said, that it can admit of any dispute) it will undeniably follow that our Author's Distinction between *Person* and *Being* (if it have any Meaning in it) will do him no service here. For if these *Names*, &c. be absolutely peculiar, and so appropriated to the Subject spoken of that they cannot belong to any other, they are peculiar, they are appropriated to the *Person*; and no other Person as well as no other Being can partake of them. And accordingly, wherever we meet with the Name *Jehovah*, it must mean, not only the same Being (this will not do) but the *self-same Person*. And therefore our Author, and his Friends who lay such mighty stress upon these Passages, must either grant that these Texts do not so absolutely restrain and peculiarize these Characters, as that they may not in any sense be apply'd to any other; or else, they must own that where they are apply'd, it is always the *self-same Person*. The latter will overthrow their whole Doctrine; the former Concession will spoil all the Force of their Argument. They are at their liberty to take which they please.

§. 19. But since these Gentlemen do insist upon it, that the *Angel*, another Person besides the Father, doth in many places assume the peculiar and distinguishing Titles of the *Great God* to himself; and that in such manner as that it was not possible for those to whom he appeared to distinguish him from the true and eternal God; let us consider what they offer in Proof of this Assertion.

It might be enough to make us suspect it, that the Writers of the New Testament don't appear to have had any Apprehension of it. I dare say, you make no question but that *St. Paul* and the rest of the *Apostles* had

read over the Old Testament, and were perfectly well acquainted with the History of God's manifesting himself to their Fathers, and understood the Scriptures as well as any can pretend to do in our Times; but we meet with no such Observations in their Writings. And, which is yet more strange, we observe that the Founders of our Religion appear to have had a very different Notion of these Matters. I believe you are pretty well satisfy'd of this by what we have already remark'd, and it may farther appear by and by.

We have already examin'd the first Instance our Author gives of the Name *Jehovah* being ascribed to Christ. We now proceed to the *Second*, Isa. 45. 24. *Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength, in Jehovah shall all the Seed of Israel be justified.* We have already observed upon another Occasion, that if Christ must be the Person meant in this Passage, and not the Father, then is the Father excluded from being *God*, ver. 22. If the Father may be intended, then our Author's Argument falls to the ground. And that there is no Incongruity in applying the things here spoken to the Father, may appear by what hath been said before concerning the Title of *Jehovah our Righteousness*. I may add, that a learned Commentator (e) of their own takes the Words most directly to intend God's *vindicating his People from the Reproach of their Enemies*; this leaves no Foundation for our Author's Argument. I would only observe, that this Sense agrees very well with another Passage in this Prophecy, Chap. 54. ult. *No Weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every Tongue that shall rise against thee thou shalt condemn. This is the Heritage of the Servants of the Lord, and their Righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.*

The next Instance, is from the 6th Chap. of *Isa.* I saw the Lord *Jehovah* sitting upon a Throne. And he said, *Go tell this People, Hear ye, &c.* The Words which *Isaiah* is commanded here to speak to the People, are quoted by *St. John* in his Gospel, Chap. 12. 40. Upon which the Evangelist remarks, *These things said Esaias, when he saw his Glory and spake of him.* "Where, says our Author, 'tis manifest enough to any whose pre-conceived Opinions

(e) Gataker in loc.

nions do not turn them aside from the obvious Sense of Scripture, that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Person here meant." That I may not seem contentious, and incur this Censure, I am willing to take it for granted, that the Evangelist means by those Words, that *Esaias* saw *Christ's* Glory; and will venture a Step farther, and suppose with our Author, that he had respect to the *Vision* recorded in the 6th Chapter of *Isaiah*, where the Prophet says, *I saw the Lord, &c.* (I might observe by the way, that here is not the word *Jehovah*, as our Author hath it; tho indeed it is in a Passage that comes afterwards, where the Prophet says, *Mine Eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.*) But I deny that it follows from hence that Christ is *Jehovah*; any more than it follows from those Words of our Lord to *Philip*, *John* 14. 9. *He that hath seen me hath seen the Father,* that Christ is the Father.

I am indeed of Opinion, that the Person who appeared, the Lord whom *Isaiah* saw sitting upon a Throne, high and lifted up, was Christ; and that the Father himself, in his own Person, did never appear as visible, for he is called by way of Distinction, *the invisible God*, Col. 1. 15. and *St. John* says twice in his Gospel, Chap. 1. 18. and in 1 *Ep.* 4. 12. *that no Man hath seen God at any time:* and *St. Paul* describes him as dwelling in that Light which no Man can approach unto, whom no Man hath seen or can see, 1 *Tim.* 6. 16. To understand this, as some do, only of his being invisible in his *Essence*, is in my Apprehension trifling; for so are all pure Spirits. To me these Expressions seem to intend no less than this, That God the Father did never in his own Person visibly appear to Men. This was the common Opinion of the antient Christian Writers; and in consequence of this, where we read of God's appearing to the *Patriarchs*, &c. they suppos'd that it was the *Logos* who appeared, but yet that he appeared as the Father's Representative. Now, inasmuch as Christ is the Image of the invisible God, and according to the foregoing Supposition, God never manifested himself to Men but in and by him; when those holy Men of old were favoured with such Appearances, they might be said to see God. The Author of the *Epistle to the Hebrews* may be suppos'd to have respect to these glorious Appearances, when he describes the Son as the *Brightness of the Father's Glory*, and the express Image of his Person: and *St. Paul*, when he speaks of him, as being in the Form of God; which Form of God he did not affect when he came

to work out our Redemption, but on the contrary, took up on him the Form of a Servant, and was made in the Likeness of Men; Phil. 2. 6, &c.

But now, tho we do suppose him to be the Person in and by whom God did appear in a glorious manner to the antient Patriarchs, &c. yet we deny that he is the Person to whom those Names and Titles of the *Almighty God*, &c. do belong: we still say, that by them is meant the Father himself, as hath been plainly demonstrated in some of those Instances which our Author refers to as Proofs of Christ's having those Names and Titles. Let me take notice here of one famous Instance, which may help to clear this matter. In the 17th of *Genesis* we read, that *Jehovah* appeared to Abraham, and said unto him, *I am the Almighty God, walk before me, and be thou perfect*. Then follows the Account of God's entring into Covenant with Abraham. Now we have undeniably prov'd, that this must be understood of the Person of the Father. We will suppose (as hath been, if our Author says right, universally agreed by antient and modern Writers) that it was the Angel, or the Son, who appeared; but then it is evident from what hath been before demonstrated, that he appeared and acted not as in his own Person, but as God's *Representative*; and what was said and done at such Times, if we will allow the inspired Writers of the New Testament to have a right understanding of these Matters, is to be conceived of as said and done by the Person of the Father. Consequently, those *Titles* and *Attributes*, or the *Characters* given of the Person spoken of in such Passages, are not given as the Characters or Titles of the Angel, or the Son, in and by whom the Father manifested himself, but indeed of the Person of the Father who appeared in and by him, and whose Representative this Angel was in all these Transactions. This I think may reconcile the expresse Declarations of the inspired Writers, together with the whole current of Scripture, attributing these things to the Father, with the receiv'd Hypothesis of its being the Angel, or the Son, who upon these occasions visibly appeared in Person; which, for ought I know, may be true.

However, if any one cannot easily take in this Account of the Matter, let him remember that we have much better Proof that the things themselves do belong to the Person of the Father singly and exclusively, (*i. e.* that he is that *God Almighty* who transacted in such manner with Abraham, &c. and

and not *Christ*) than we have that it was the Person of *Christ* who appeared upon such Occasions: For the one we have the express Authority of the inspired Writers; the other is but the Opinion of Men, tho I deny not but there may be some ground for it in the sacred Writings.

Now, according to the Account which hath been given of these *Appearances* of God under the Old Testament, we may allow that in this Vision *Isaiah* saw *Christ's* Glory: He was the Lord sitting upon a Throne, he was the Brightness or the shining (f) forth of the Father's Glory, he had Glory with the Father before the World was. In some lesser Manifestation of that Glory he might appear to the antient Patriarchs; I say, some lesser Manifestation, for undoubtedly they could not bear in this mortal State the full Manifestation of it, such as we shall behold when we shall be with him where he is, Joh. 17. 24. *Isaiah* saw his Glory, then he appeared in the Form of God. And yet when the Prophet says, Mine Eyes have seen the King *Jehovah*, the Lord of Hosts, that Name or Title doth not belong to *Christ* as in his own Person, but to the Person of the Father who was represented in him and by him, and who was properly then their King, their Law-giver, and their Judge. It may seem to be some Confirmation of the Account we have given, that there is a Difference of Title: In the Beginning of the Chapter, the Prophet uses only the common Title of Lord, not *Jehovah*, for there he speaks of the Person himself who actually appear'd; in the latter Expression he considers it as the Appearance of God, this being the only way wherein God or *Jehovah* did manifest himself: And thus in seeing the Lord, i. e. *Christ*, he saw *Jehovah*, the Father; which is perfectly agreeable to that saying of our Lord mention'd before, *He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father*.

You will excuse, Sir, my dwelling so long on this Point: I was willing to set this matter in as clear Light as I could, and to let you see that this Notion of *Christ's* appearing to the antient Patriarchs (which, our Author says, hath universally obtain'd among antient and modern Writers) may be allow'd; and yet this be no Proof of his assuming to himself, in his own Person, the peculiar distinguishing and most appropriated Characters of Godhead. So that neither will this Instance

(f) *απαυγασμα*.

Instance prove, that Christ in his own Person is called *Jehovah*.

The next Proof he brings is a Passage in *Zech. Chap. 11.* ver. 12, 13. compar'd with *Matt. 27. 9.* In the Citation of this Prophecy in the Gospel, there is no mention of *Jehovah* as being the Person that was valued. The Evangelist's Words are, *Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the Prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of Silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the Children of Israel did value; and gave them for the Potter's Field, as the Lord appointed me.* Where you may observe that the Evangelist expressly cites this as a Prophecy of *Jeremiah*. It is true, we do not find it at present in the Book of *Jeremiah*; but neither are the Words, as quoted by the Evangelist, found in *Zechariah*. And, indeed, that Passage in *Zechariah*, to which it is suppos'd the Evangelist doth refer, plainly interrupts the Series of the Discourse, and seems to have no manner of Connexion with what goes before and comes after. But supposing this to be the Prophecy refer'd to, if you read the entire Passage, you will see that the Words our Author insists on [*a goodly Price that I was prized at*] are not brought in as the Words of *Jehovah*, but are indeed the Words of the Prophet, who by the Appointment of God, represented and prefigured, as in a Type, what was afterwards to be done to Christ; as before he seems to have represented the Lord himself, making Covenant with the People. See ver. 4. *Thus saith the Lord my God, Feed the Flock of the Slaughter.*— Ver. 7. *And I took unto me two Staves, the one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bands, and I fed the Flock.*— Ver. 10. *And I took my Staff, even Beauty, and cut it asunder, that I might break my Covenant which I had made with all the People, and it was broken in that day: So the Poor of the Flock that waited upon me, knew that it was the Word of the Lord.* Are not these the Words of the Prophet? Then immediately follows, *And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my Price; and if not, forbear.* Is it not the Prophet that speaks still? *So they weighed for my Price thirty pieces of Silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the Potter. A goodly Price that I was prized at of them.* Now these words, *A goodly Price, &c.* are not, as our Author takes them to be, the Words of *Jehovah*, but the Words of the Prophet; as appears by all that went before, and also by what follows: *Then I took the*
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thirty pieces of Silver, and cast them to the Potter in the House of the Lord. The Evangelist adds, which makes it yet more plain, As the Lord commanded me.

Our Author says, there are several other Places where the name *Jehovah* is applied to Christ. If you please, Sir, we will now look into them, that we may have done with this his first Evidence. The next Instance I meet with, is taken from the 18th Chapter of *Genesis*, where, as he supposes, one of the *three Men* that appeared to *Abraham* is called *Jehovah*, whom therefore he takes to be Christ. Now it might be sufficient to say, that this is not so plain as to satisfy several of his own Party, and therefore we may hope he will not reckon this one of his *resistless Proofs*. A learned Commentator (g) of their own Side, is not of our Author's Opinion, that *one of these three Men was Jehovah*; and observes, that the *Jews* did not understand it so; but conceived these three Angels to be of the Retinue of the divine Majesty, who afterwards convers'd with *Abraham* in the visible Glory in which he was wont to appear. We read in the beginning of this Chapter, that *Jehovah appeared to Abraham in the Plains of Mamre*: but there is no necessity of concluding that *Jehovah* himself was one of the three Men; we may rather suppose that this appearance of the Angels as three Men, and *Abraham's* entertaining them, was to usher in the appearance of the *divine Majesty*. You may observe a remarkable Change of the Persons speaking, in the 9th and 10th Verses, which confirms this Supposition. *They said unto him, Where is Sarah thy Wife?* Upon *Abraham's* Answer, *He said unto him, i. e. God himself speaks*. Afterwards it is said, ver. 15. that the *Men rose up and looked towards Sodom, and Abraham went with them to bring them on their Way*. One would naturally understand this of all the three, there being no hint of the contrary; nor do we find any Intimation in the whole Story of *Abraham's* taking one of them to be *Jehovah*: but after that he had brought the Men on their way to *Sodom*, we find *Abraham standing before the Lord*. To this we may add, that the Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, when he is recommending Hospitality from this Instance of *Abraham*, takes no notice of his having entertained any Person greater than Angels. How would it have rais'd the Argument if he had said, *Some unawares have*
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(g) *Patrick in loc.*

entertained *Jehovah himself*? One can scarce think he would have omitted this, had he apprehended it to be so; especially if he had thought it so plain in the History, as our Author takes it to be. If after all, any will maintain that one of the three Men is called *Jehovah*; we must conclude, either that this was the Father himself in his own Person, which will overturn our Friend's Argument; or else, whoever he be, that he hath this Title not as in his own Person, but as God's Representative; for doubtless it is the same Person who says, *I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of Life*, as he had before promis'd to *Abraham*, that he should have a Son by *Sarah*, Chap. 18. And this, as we have seen, *St. Paul* understood to be the Person of the Father, *Rom. 4.*

The Angel that appeared to *Gideon* was in like manner God's Representative, *Jehovah* spake by him. We shall have occasion to make some particular Remarks upon that History by and by.

The like might be said of the Captain of the Lord's Hosts, who appeared to *Joshua*. Some orthodox Trinitarians have supposed that this was *Michael*, who in *Daniel* is called their Prince; and they conceive that at the same time God himself appeared, whence the Command to *Joshua* to loose his Shoes—— and then *Jehovah* spake in the following Chapter. There is no Proof that he who declared himself to be the Captain of the Hosts of *Jehovah*, was the *Jehovah*, who in the sixth Chapter gave Orders to *Joshua* about the taking of *Jericho*.

Ezekiel saw the likeness of a Throne, and upon the likeness of the Throne the likeness as the Appearance of a Man above upon it, &c. He afterwards says, *This was the Appearance of the likeness of the Glory of Jehovah*. If the Appearance of a Man above upon the Throne was indeed the Person of Christ, as our Author supposes, (tho indeed I don't find the Text says any thing of it) it may confirm what we have said before of Christ's being the Brightness of the Father's Glory, but is no Proof that he himself in his own Person is *Jehovah*.

Amos's Vision may be understood after the same manner as that of *Isaiah*. Finally he observes, that in the first six Chapters of *Zechariah*, the Angel of the Lord that conversed with him in the Form of a Man, seems sometimes to be the same with the Lord or *Jehovah*. You will find the Style of this Prophecy very obscure and broken, the Transitions from one

the Person to another many times very intricate; the Instance our Author particularly chose to insist on in this Pro-necy, we have consider'd already: and as we have seen reason to believe him mistaken in his Application of that passage (Chap. 11. 13.) which in all probability he thought to be most clear for his purpose, we may suppose he will have no better Success in any of the rest, when duly examin'd.

We have now gone through all that our Author hath produc'd for the making good his first Instance of a *Name peculiar to the Great God ascribed unto Christ*; and I think it may still be a Question, whether the name *Jehovah* be ever in the Old Testament attributed to Christ as in his own Person; it seems rather to be meant every where of the *Father* manifesting himself in him, or to be given to him merely as the *Representative* of the Father. We have evidently prov'd that this Name, so far as it is declared to be peculiar and appropriate, is appropriated to the Person of the Father; whence it will follow, that if it ever be applied to another Person, it must be taken in a less perfect Sense, as our Author and his Friends own that the Title of *God* is. And therefore, if it should appear, that in *Zechariah*, or any other place, the Angel of the Lord is called *Jehovah*, this will be no Proof that he is, as our Author speaks, the same *Jehovah*, that *Jehovah* whose Angel he is. It might be supposed that the common Sense of Mankind would be sufficient to prevent any such Mistake.

And now, Sir, let me appeal to you; Would you imagine that we were to learn the fundamental Doctrine of Christianity from such obscure hints as these about the use of the name *Jehovah* in the Old Testament? Is this the *over-bearing Light*, are these the *resistless Proofs* that must overpower the Minds of Men, and carry us away, as it were, by main Force, against the whole stream of the general Language of Scripture, together with many plain direct Assertions to the contrary? What think you, Sir, is this a Foundation sufficient to bear the Weight of a Doctrine so *stocking* as this is confessed to be?

But perhaps his other Proofs are more convincing. I believe you will think that they had need be so, to support the Confidence which our Author and his Friends do generally assume when they are pleading against us. We shall try their Force.

§. 20. The next thing he insists on, is the *Name of God* with *some additional Honour* (h). The first he mentions, is the *True God*. To prove this a distinguishing Name, he produces that Expression of our Lord, *That they might know thee the only true God*; where this Title is indeed so distinguishing, as to distinguish the Person of the Father from Christ himself, as we have shewn before. One would think this a very odd Introduction to another Text, which is to prove that Christ is in the same absolute Sense the true God too. While a Man hath this Declaration of our Lord staring him in the Face, he ought sure to have very good Evidence that the Text he brings doth indeed give this Title to *another besides the Father*. Let us then consider the Words (1 John 5. 20, 21.) *And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an Understanding that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal Life. Little Children, keep yourselves from Idols. Amen.* 'It is very unlikely, says our Author, that the Apostle John should conclude his Epistle with such a solemn Charge against Idolatry, or the worshipping that which is not God, and yet in the foregoing Verse, leave his Expression concerning *the true God*, so easily and so naturally to be interpreted concerning *Christ Jesus*, if he were not the *True God*.' Now we affirm the direct contrary, viz. that the Apostle hath left the Expression concerning the True God so easily and so naturally to be interpreted concerning *him whose Son Christ is*, that one would wonder how any could mistake him. Not to observe that in many places of this Epistle the term *God* is undeniably meant of the Person of the Father, and, for ought appears, is not in any one Passage throughout the whole Epistle, to be understood otherwise; and that even in a few Verses preceding the Words our Author insists on, it is no less than *eight or nine times* evidently meant of the Father, from ver. 9. of this Chapter. To pass all this, the Words themselves do plainly enough determine the Person here intended. *The Son of God is come, and hath given us an Understanding to know HIM that is true.* Who is this *Him*? doth it mean himself? no certainly, but the Father; which is agreeable to what this same Apostle says in his Gospel, Chap. 1. 18. *No Man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son who*

is in the Bosom of the Father, hath declared him. Many Copies read the Words. — bath given us an Understanding to know the true God. But 'tis abundantly plain who is meant, reading the Words as we have them. And we are in him that is true, i. e. in the true one, or the true God, whom the Son hath given us an Understanding to know, even in his Son. You must observe, that [even] is put in: according to the Original, 'tis only in or by his Son; Whose Son? the Son of this true one. Surely not the Son of the Son Jesus Christ; but the Son of this true God, whom Christ hath given us an Understanding to know. Here the Apostle adds his Testimony, *This is the true God*, He whom the Son hath made known to us. And it is eternal Life to know him; according to our Lord's Words, *John 17. 3. This is Life eternal, to know thee the only true God.* And now, Sir, what think you, is this a Passage sufficient to confront those express Words of our Lord, determining this Character of the true God to the Father only, even in contradistinction to himself? Yet this is the only Text he brings for the Proof of Christ's being called the true God.

The second Title he takes notice of, is the *Great* and the *Mighty God*. Of the former he cites one Instance, *Tit. 2. 13.* All the Proof he gives that it is there meant of Christ is, that the Words may properly be translated, *Our Great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.* To which we reply, they may as properly be translated, *Looking for the blessed Hope, and the appearing of the Glory of the Great God, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ.* This Sense of the Words you will find entirely to harmonize with the Account our Lord himself hath given us of his appearing; *The Son of Man shall come in his own Glory, and in the Glory of the Father,* *Luke 9. 26.*

For the other Appellation, *The mighty God*, he cites *Isaiah 9. 6.* *To us a Child is born, to us a Son is given, his Name shall be called Wonderful, The mighty God.* That Emphasis, the mighty God, is not according to the Original: It is only a mighty God. Can we think it strange that he should be called a God, when we find that Name applied to many others? or that he should be called a mighty God, when we know that *All Power in Heaven and Earth is given to him?* But I should think, no one that reads this Prophecy of Christ could be in any danger of taking him to be the Great God himself; since this is a Promise from the Great God, and he engages to see it accomplished. *To us a Child*

is born, to us a Son is given, his Name shall be called Wonderful——Of the Increase of his Government there shall be no End — The Zeal of the Lord of Hosts shall perform this.

A third Name is the *Only wise God*. For this he gives us one Text, *Jude ver. 24*. But there is no Evidence that Christ is the Person meant there; as hath been shown before.

A fourth Name is the *Only God*, or *God and none else*. For the Proof of this being applied to Christ, he brings *Isa. 45. latter End*. This also we have already taken notice of, and sufficiently refuted.

The fifth and last Instance is, *God Blessed for ever*. For this he gives you also one single Text, *Rom. 9. 5*. *Christ—who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen*. Here our Author must give us leave to acquaint you (as he himself sometimes takes the same Liberty) that the Words may bear another rendring, viz. *He who is God over all be blessed for ever*; and so be taken as a Doxology to God the Father, who had fulfilled his Promise to the *Israelites*, in sending his Son in the Flesh. This may seem the more probable Interpretation, inasmuch as we find that the term *God* throughout this Epistle, is every where else meant of the Father; and this Character of *Blessed for ever*, both in this Epistle, and in the other Passage cited by our Author, is given to the Father. But if they will insist on it, (tho we don't grant that there is any resistless Proof of it) we reply, That allowing these words to be spoken concerning Christ, they are far short of proving that he is the *One true God*. This is an Expression very different from that of *The Blessed God*, or *The Blessed*; as when the High Priest said to Christ, *Art thou the Son of The Blessed?* We can say that Christ is *God over all*, for *God hath raised him from the dead, and set him at his own Right Hand far above all Principalities—and hath put all things under his Feet*: But yet, as it is manifest according to the Apostle, that *when he saith All things are put under him, He is excepted who put all things under him*; so we think it no less manifest, that He under whom God hath put all things, is not one and the same God with Him who put all things under him. And we make no scruple of calling him *Blessed for ever*, being ready to join with Saints and Angels, saying, *Blessing and Honour, and Glory and Power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever*.

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Here ends the Demonstration of Christ's being one and the same God with the Father, from the *peculiar divine Names* attributed to him. What *resistless* Force these Proofs carry with them, I leave you to judge, now that you have heard our Remarks upon them.

Before we dismiss this Article, we must take notice of what our Author hath remark'd concerning the use of the word *God* in Scripture. He was sensible that this is frequently applied to others who have not *true Godhead*. To prevent any prejudice to his Argument from this Observation, he remarks (i), that 'when the word *God* is applied to Creatures in Scripture, there is generally some degrading Circumstance, or some diminishing Expression added in the same Place, to exclude them from any Interest or Share in the *True Godhead*. But when it is ascribed to Christ, there are Characters of additional Honour often joined to it, to shew that he is the *True God*.' After this our Author roundly affirms, that our Lord Jesus is called the *True God*, the *Great and the Mighty God*, the *only Wise God*, *God and there is none besides him*. What Foundation there is for such Assertions, you have seen. I would not be thought to suggest, that the same degrading Circumstances, or diminishing Expressions which are added, as our Author speaks, to exclude others from an Interest in the *True Godhead*, are to be applied to Christ. We know that many of them cannot. But this I think is worthy Observation, that generally when the word *God* is applied to Christ, there is some Circumstance that may sufficiently shew the direct contrary to what our Author asserts, namely, that he is not the *True God* in the highest and most absolute Sense. I shall instance particularly in those Passages which our Author hath insisted on, such I mean as have really applied the word *God* to Christ. Read the whole Passage in that 9th Chapter of *Isaiah*: He of whom it is prophesied, that his Name shall be called a *Mighty God*, is described at the same time, as being a *Child*, as being a *Son*, as being *given* by God, and as receiving his Kingdom and Authority from the *Lord of Hosts*. Indeed we have but one more in all our Author's Instances that we can grant to belong to Christ, and that is in *Rom.* chap. 9. ver. 5. which, to avoid dispute, we have allowed. But here also we read of his being born or proceeding

(i) P. 48.

ing from the *Fathers, according to the Flesh*. I know very well that our Adversaries make no scruple of affirming concerning the *Most high God*, that he was born of a Woman. But as I am persuaded that their Notion of the Incarnation of Christ is very different from the Scripture Account of the *Word being made Flesh*; so I am satisfy'd that were the Scripture Notion of Jesus Christ *coming in the Flesh* received (as it was among Christians when the New Testament was wrote) this it self would be a sufficient Guard against any Man's taking the same Person to be the supreme God. But there is another Passage of the Old Testament, where Christ is called *God*, which will farther illustrate our Observation; and that is in *Psal. 45. Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever*—— *God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the Oil of Gladness above thy Fellows*. If *Angels are called Gods*, says our Author in pursuing his Remark, *they are such Gods as worship a superior God. Worship him all ye Gods*. So say I, Is Christ called God? He is such a God as hath a God above him, one whom he calls *his God*; this you know is frequent in the New Testament.

I think we have said enough to this first Head of Argument, the *Names of God*.

§. 21. We go on to the second, the *Titles of God ascribed to Christ (k)*. The first is, *the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*. It may be a sufficient Answer to this, That the *Apostles* of our Lord, even after they had received the Promise of the Spirit, do not appear to have known this, or at least did not see fit to give us any Intimation of it. We don't find that there was any other Person known among them by the Title of *the God of Abraham, &c.* but He *whose Son Christ was*: See the several Passages before refer'd to in the Book of *Acts*, and in the *Epistles* of St. Paul. But if our Author hath attained to greater Light in this Matter than the *Apostles* had, let us not reject it. Tho I question whether, upon due Consideration, this Notion of our Author will not be found a Contradiction to their's, rather than an Improvement of it. However, if he hath *resistless Proofs*, we will receive it as an Increase of Light.

We have already overturn'd his main Foundation, viz. that it was *the Angel of the Lord, who assumed to himself the*
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Title of the God of Abraham, &c. when he appeared to Moses in the Bush. It remains only that we consider those other Appearances of Christ to the Patriarchs, which he judges to be a farther Confirmation of his Assertion. We shall pass by those which we have already taken notice of.

Christ Jesus, says our Author, *is that God who called to Abraham, and bid him offer up his Son, Gen. 22.* Now I should think that *He* who tempted Abraham, bidding him offer up his Son, and he who said, upon Abraham's obeying this Command, *Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing that thou hast not with-held thy Son, thine only Son, from me, was the very same Person* as said afterwards, *Surely, blessing, I will bless thee, &c.* I believe you will think it very natural to understand all this of one and the same Person. Now as to the last Passage, you may see whom the Apostle understood to be meant, even the *Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Acts 3. latter End.* See also *Heb. 6. 13. Chap. 11. 19.* But says our Author, He is called the *Angel of the Lord*; this he thinks evident from those Words utter'd by the Angel, *Now I know, &c.* But what if we suppose that these were indeed the Words of God utter'd by the Angel, speaking in the Name of the Lord? We may find Instances in the Writings of the Prophets, where God is the Person speaking, when yet there is no direct Preface of *Thus saith the Lord (l).* And when we find afterwards this very Angel speaking by Commission, declaring as a Messenger what the Lord said, *Ver. 16.* may we not very well suppose, that in the former Passage the Words were not his own, but God's? tho the Angel doth not expressly introduce them with such a Declaration, when he was in so much haste to stop Abraham's Hand, which was already stretched out to slay his Son.

Another Proof he brings is from *Gen. 43. 15, 16.* *The Angel which redeemed Jacob from all Evil is,* says our Author, *the God before whom his Fathers, Abraham and Isaac, did walk, and the God which fed him all his Life long.* But this is not the Assertion either of Jacob or of Moses: And many of his own Party have thought otherwise (m).

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(l) *Jer. 4. 22. Chap. 5. 19.*

(m) *Vid. Patrick in loc. as also upon the former Passage, Gen. 22. 11.*

There remains but one more Instance out of *Genesis*, and that is of the *Man who wrestled with Jacob*, who is, says our Author, called *God*. But neither is this so expressed in the *Text*. I shall only say, that allowing this to be the *Person of Christ*, what we have observed before upon *Isaiah's Vision*, will easily account for all that is said upon this Occasion.

There remains yet the Instance of the *Angel appearing to Gideon*, which I desire you would take particular Notice of. For this History is of it self a full Confutation of the Inferences our Author draws from the Angel's speaking sometimes as *God*. Some of their own Party have been sensible of the Weakness of this Argument. A learned Doctor, in a Book written purposely for the Defence of this Doctrine, hath given it up, acknowledging (n) that "It was usual in those Parts for such as deliver'd Messages from others, to speak after the same manner as those very Persons would have done in whose Names they came; and those who returned Answers by Messengers, spake as if those very Persons were present, in whose Name the Messengers came." In the History before us we have an Angel speaking to *Gideon*: He speaks as *Jehovah*. Our Author will conclude from hence, that the Person who speaks must be *Jehovah himself*. If *Gideon* did not apprehend so, we have good ground to suspect that our Author hath mistaken the Import of such Expressions. I know not what we can desire more to satisfy us of the Meaning of such manner of Expression, than to see plainly how such Expressions were taken at the Time by the Persons themselves, who were immediately concern'd. What, did not *Gideon* understand their own Language and their own Way of speaking, as well as our Author and his learned Friends? Observe, I pray you, some Passages in this Discourse of the Angel with *Gideon*. *And the Lord said, Go in this thy Might, and thou shalt save Israel from the Hand of the Midianites. Have not I sent thee? And he said unto him, O my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel?—And the Lord said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites.* Had our Author been present, no doubt he would presently have said as *St. John*, when he saw the Miracle of the Fishes (*Joh. 21. 7.*) *It is the Lord*; This must be *Jehovah himself*: Could any

(n) Dr. Bennet's Discourse of Trinity in Unity, p. 59, &c.

any other use such Expressions as these? And with the same Assurance, we may suppose, he would have concluded from the following Words of *Gideon*, *If now I have found Grace in thy Sight, shew me a Sign that thou talkest with me*, that *Gideon* himself understood it so; and took this Person to be *Jehovah* himself, if so be the story had ended here. But, alas, it happens unluckily (I mean for our Author's Argument) that the History it self tells us, that *Gideon*, notwithstanding all these Expressions of the Person who talked with him, and notwithstanding what he himself said by way of Answer, did all this while take this Person to be no more than a *Man*, who indeed an extraordinary Messenger, speaking in the Name of the Lord. For we read, that when *Gideon* had brought forth his Present, and the Angel of the Lord had by touching it caused Fire to come out of the Rock and consumed it, and so departed out of his Sight, then *did Gideon perceive that it was an Angel of the Lord*. Nor even then doth it appear that he took him to be *Jehovah* himself. He cries out, *Alas, O Lord God, for because I have seen an Angel of the Lord face to face*. Possibly upon farther Consideration, it may not appear to our Author himself with that resistless Evidence as he before apprehended, that the Angel who appeared upon such Occasions did assume to himself in his own Person the peculiar and distinguishing Titles of the Great God: And perhaps he may upon cooler Reflection think he was too bold (I believe, Sir, you will think so) when he said, "It was not possible for those to whom he appeared to distinguish him from the true and eternal God, when he us'd those express Words, *I am God Almighty*, &c. and consequently they were necessarily exposed to the Danger of Idolatry, and in a manner (I may say) they were unavoidably led into it, if the Person speaking to them were not really the true and eternal God, the proper Object of Divine Worship (o)." You see it was possible for them of old Time to hear one speaking in the Name of God, speaking Words which must properly belong to God, and yet not take the Person speaking to be himself really the true and Eternal God.

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As a farther Proof of the Weakness of our Author's Argument, I would desire you to consider what the New Testament declares concerning the giving of the Law at Mount Sinai. There, if any where, it must be allow'd that God spake; that is, that the Words which were spoken, were the Words of God: yet according to the Account we have by St. Stephen and by St. Paul, the Law itself was given by Angels, Acts 7. 53. *Who have received the Law by the Disposition of Angels.* Gal. 3. 19. *It was ordained by Angels in the hand of a Mediator.* And in the Epist. to the Heb. Chap. 2. 2. it is expressly called the Word spoken by Angels; where a particular Stress is laid upon it, and an Argument drawn to the Advantage of the Gospel, from the higher Dignity and Glory of the Person who first published this to Men. *If the Word spoken by Angels was stedfast, and every Transgression and Disobedience received a just Recompence of Reward; how shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation, which first began to be spoken by the Lord?* If the Words at the giving of the Law were spoken either by the Person of the Father, or by the Person of Christ, 'tis evident the Apostle's Argument is lost. And tho I do suppose that Christ was there, as being the Manifestation of the divine Glory, according to the Account before given (see also Psalm 68. 17.) yet I think it is undeniable, from the express Assertion of the Apostle, and from his Argument, that the Words were spoken by Angels, and not by Christ in his own Person. They were then the Words of God pronounced or spoken by Angels. And if this be so, all our Author's arguing from the Things spoken, to the Characters of the Person by whom they were immediately spoken, falls to the Ground. I may illustrate this by an Instance well known in our Times. I suppose, Sir, since you have been among us, you may have seen some of King George's Speeches to his Parliament: it's likely you have heard that King George doth not speak them himself, but gives the Speech to my Lord Chancellor, and he reads it. Now if a Man upon hearing my Lord Chancellor speak those Words to the Parliament, should conclude that he is King George, he would certainly be mistaken.

There is one Thing more I have to remark before I dismiss this Head, and that is, If our Author's arguing from these Texts be right, it cannot be denied but that the Jew-

the Church under the Old Testament had as clear and explicit Revelation of the *Distinction of Persons in the Godhead*, as we can pretend to have. It was not possible, says our Author, for those to whom this Person [the Angel of the Lord] appeared, to distinguish him from the true and eternal God. You see then, this must be pastdoubt with them, that he was the true and eternal God. Well, could it be less evident to them who read the Books of Moses, that this Angel of the Lord was a distinct Person, distinct from him who said, *Behold I send an Angel before thee to keep thee in thy Way; beware of him, provoke him not, for my Name is in him?* Our Author all along insists on the Plainness of Scripture with respect to both these; and frequently suggests that he asserts only what the plain obvious Meaning of the Words must necessarily lead us to. And doth he think the Jews did not perceive the plain, obvious, literal and necessary Meaning of the Books of Moses, as well as we can do now? We conclude then, If this be the plain, obvious, literal Meaning, this, I say, which our Author hath given of the several Passages he hath cited from the Old Testament, the Jewish Church could not but have as clear Knowledge of this Doctrine, that the Two Persons, Father and Son, were the One true God, as we Christians can have. Let them not talk then any more of those darker Dispensations, and glory in our present Light, and represent this as the peculiar Privilege of Christians. There is no need of those favourable Allowances to the antient Jews and Patriarchs, that they might be saved without an explicit Knowledge of the Divine Persons concern'd in our Salvation (p). Or if they can make such favourable Allowances to them, as supposing them not to have had an explicit Knowledge of the distinct Persons, why will they not be as favourable to us? Since, if our Author's arguing be just, it is evident they had as clear Revelation of this Mystery (at least as to Two Persons) as he can pretend that we have; and indeed so plain, as that we cannot but own that if the Matters did appear to be as he represents them, (which the antient Jews could not be ignorant of, if indeed they were so) we should be entirely satisfy'd.

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The Second Instance, our Author gives us of a distinguishing Title of God ascribed to Christ, is *The Lord of Hosts*. For Proof of this he cites *Hosea 12. 3, &c.* where, he says, *we may see that God, the Lord God of Hosts, is the Angel with whom Jacob wrestled (4)*. I don't see that the Text says any such thing. Let us read the Words, *By his Strength he had Power with God: And he had Power over the Angel, and prevailed. Which was indeed a lively Emblem and sensible Representation of the Power he had with God; and being here brought in as an Instance of the Power he had with God, the following Words, He wept and made Supplication to him, must still be understood to refer to God. I might observe to you, that the Septuagint Translation favours this Interpretation, for they read it—made Supplication to me, which cannot refer to the Angel.*

Another Proof of this, he brings from *Isa. 8. 13, 14.* compar'd with *1 Pet. 2. 8.* In the former it is said of the *Lord of Hosts* himself, that *he shall be for a Sanctuary, but for a Stone of Stumbling*: in the latter it is said that *Christ is made a Stone of Stumbling and a Rock of Offence*. But was not the Lord, even the God of Israel, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for a Sanctuary to the People of Israel? and might he not be for a Stone of Stumbling before Christ's Coming? Any one that reads the Context will easily perceive that the Things spoken there had an immediate respect to the Circumstances of the People at that Time. *The Lord of Hosts* declares by the Prophet *Isaiah*, that he would be for a Stone of Stumbling to those who are entering into Confederacies which he did not approve of. We read in the Times of the Gospel, that *Christ was a Stone of Stumbling*: Therefore Christ is the *Lord of Hosts* spoken of in *Isaiah*. Where is the Consequence? I profess I see none.

Another Instance of this kind we may find, he says, in the same Prophet, *Isa. 54. 5.* It is indeed of the same kind, the Evidence much like that preceding. *Thy Maker is thine Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his Name.* You know this Allusion is frequently to be met with in the Prophets. *I am married unto you, saith the Lord, I have betrothed thee to me in Righteousness.* And their first solemn Engagement to God in the Wilderness,

represented as their *Espousals*, Jer. 2. 2. Will our Author say that this Title is not applicable to the Person of the *Father*? I suppose not. Was it not the Father who took them to be his People, and enter'd into Covenant with them? This we have abundantly demonstrated. But the Argument is, that Christ in the New Testament is represented as the *Husband of the Church*, 2 Cor. 11. 2. Under the *Jewish* OEconomy, God to express his tender Concern and Affection for his People, represents himself under the Character or Title of their *Husband*: Now that God hath glorified his Son *Jesus Christ*, and made him Head over all Things, and hath committed to him the immediate Care and Government of his Church; this *Jesus* is represented as the Husband of the Church. Doth this prove that he is the *Lord of Hosts*, the God of *Israel*, who before bare this Character? where is the Consequence? If indeed the inspired Writers of the New Testament had called him the *Lord of Hosts*, if the *Apostles* had any where told us that he was the Person meant in this Prophecy, then we should have made no Dispute about this Title belonging to Christ. But I believe, Sir, you will scarcely think *Christ's* being called our Husband under the New Testament, as the *Lord of Hosts* was called their Husband under the Old Testament, a resistless Proof of his being *The Lord of Hosts* spoken of in the Old Testament.

The Argument from the next Title will appear to be as far short of Demonstration. *God is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords: Christ is also call'd King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*. Who will wonder at it when we are told, that *God hath exalted him far above all Principalities and Powers, and hath put all Things under his Feet, and hath made him Head over all Things*? But that any one should hence conclude that he is the *same one God* with him who hath thus exalted him, this indeed one might well wonder at. And judge you whether the New Testament hath unavoidably led us into a Snare by giving this Title to *Christ*, when it hath so expressly, and so frequently declar'd that all this Authority and Dominion he receives from *God*: Yea, and tells us, that when he shall have put down all Rule and Authority, then shall the Son himself (he who hath now this Name written on his Thigh, *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*) be subject unto him who put all things under him, that God may be all in all,

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1 Cor. 15. 28. Such Inferences, as these we have been now considering, may perhaps seem strange to you; but we must bear with them. By what you have seen of the various Religions and Professions in the World, you know how to make Allowance for Prepossession and Prejudice.

The last Instance of a peculiar Title of God ascribed to Christ is, *The First and the Last*. This, it must be own'd, hath more Appearance of Argument. *Christ* doth in so many words assume this Title to himself, *Rev. 1. 17. 18.* But, Sir, I must desire you to observe, that this follows after a solemn Declaration of the *Father*, that he is *Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End*. For the 8th ver. of this Chapt. (which our Author saith may perhaps belong to *Christ*) doth evidently belong to the *Father*. Read the Words, *I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty*. We enquire now, Who it is says these words, *I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End*. The sacred Pen-man says it is *He which is, and which was, and which is to come*. Look to the Beginning of this Prophecy, you see plainly who is described by this Character: this is in the very *Front* of the Book, the Character of the *Father* as distinguished from *Christ*. *John to the seven Churches which are in Asia, Grace be to you, and Peace from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come, and from the Seven Spirits, and from Jesus Christ*. By the way, we may observe, that if this be, as our Author supposes, the Explication of the Name *Jehovah*, this Name is in the New Testament peculiarly attributed to the *Father* by way of Distinction from *Christ*. We may add, that the other Title mentioned in this 8th ver. as describing the Person who saith, *I am Alpha and Omega, &c.* [*Ho Pantocrator*] is throughout this Book applied only to the *Father*. Well, thus stands the Matter, We have the *Father* first, declaring that he is *Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End*. Afterwards another Person is introduced saying, *I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last*; to which is added, *I am he that liveth and was dead*. Now the Question is, whether we must understand this Title as being equally ascribed to Two several Persons in the same absolute Sense, or whether we ought not in Reason to understand the One in the most

most absolute Sense, which is agreeable to the Character by which he is described when he assumes this Title, viz. *He which is, which was, and which is to come*; the other in a subordinate Sense, which is also agreeable to the following part of his Character there mentioned, *Who was dead and is alive*; as well as to the whole strain of Scripture. Our Author himself, to support his own Notion, must allow that Christ cannot be said in the most absolute Sense to be *The First and the Last*. Doth he not tell us, when he is giving Account of the *three glorious Agents, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, that *the Word Father signifies some Superior Character, from whom the Son derives, at least his Character of Sonship, and upon whom he depends so far as he is a Son (r)?* Now can that Person who derives from another, and depends upon another, say in the most absolute Sense, *I am the First Person and the Last Person*? They will say perhaps, He is the First and the Last *Being*, tho not absolutely the First Person. If you could form any Notion of this Distinction, you might however observe that there is no Foundation for it in the Text. They commonly make a mighty stir about this Distinction in descanting upon that Passage in *1 John 5. These Three are One*; the Word [*one*] being not in the *Masculine Gender*, not [*Heis*] which denotes one Person, but [*Hen*] in the *Neuter*, which, say they, signifies one Thing, one *Being*. This Remark (which sometimes serves them to make a Flourish with) is here directly against them. Christ doth not say, I am [*To Proton*] the First and the Last Being, but I am [*Ho Protos, and Ho Efeatos.*] which according to the common Acceptation of Words denotes, the *Person* who is first, &c. But this would overthrow their whole Scheme; for according to this, either Christ must be the same Person with the Father, or there must be Two First Persons in the Trinity.

But to consider the Words themselves as spoken by Christ. May we not very well understand them, (without putting any manner of Force upon them) as declaring to us, that *Christ* is now by the Appointment of God, at the Head of all Dispensations of divine Providence, whether in the Church or in the World; and that he must con-

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continge so till he shall have accomplished all that God hath foretold should come to pass? This Title may also denote his being the Author and Finisher of our Faith; or, his being the Original and the End of the whole Creation. Either of these is agreeable to the plain Account we have in the New Testament. There we are told that God hath made him *Head over all Things*, and that *He must reign till all his Enemies be made his Footstool*; that *all things were made by him and for him*; and he is call'd the *Author and Finisher of our Faith*. Where is the Absurdity or the Difficulty of supposing the same Title in a subordinate Sense given to the Son, which in the highest and most absolute Sense is given to the Father? We have a plain Instance of this in the Title mentioned before this; Christ is *King of Kings and Lord of Lords*, yet hath he his Kingdom, as is abundantly demonstrated both in the Old Testament and the New, from the Father, and must finally (as we have seen) *give up the Kingdom to him*, who is therefore in the most absolute Sense called the *only Potentate*. In short, I would ask whether there is not enough in these two Passages compared together to distinguish the one Person from the other, and to direct us to which of the Two we should ascribe the Superior Glory; when the One says, *I am Alpha and Omega, &c.* and is at the same time described as being *He which is, and which was, and which is to come*; and the other afterwards says, *I am Alpha and Omega—who was dead and am alive*: especially, when we read what is said in the Introduction to this Prophecy, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto him*, and the different Descriptions and Characters that are given of the Two Persons throughout this Book. I leave it to you to judge, upon an impartial Perusal of this Book, whether there hath not been sufficient Care taken thro the whole to preserve unto the Father his peculiar Glory; and whether any who should read it, not prejudic'd beforehand, would be in danger from Christ's assuming this Title, of taking him to be God equal with the Father.

We have now done with the Second Head of Arguments, the *Titles of God*. Of the Four Instances our Author hath given us, the Two first, for ought appears, do not belong to Christ; and as to the Two latter, they are far from being *resistless Proofs* of what our Author pretends to deduce from them.

§. 22. We proceed now to the next Head of Argument, *the Attributes of God ascribed to Christ (s).*

The First he mentions, is *Omniscience*. Peter saith to Christ, *Lord thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.* It is well known that such general Expressions are often us'd in all manner of Writings, without intending them to be understood as absolutely universal. Many Instances of, this nature you will meet with in Scripture. *Jesus saith the third time; Simon lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee: i. e. No Man can conceal his Heart from thee, thou knowest that I love thee.* Will this prove that Peter conceived Christ's Knowledge to be absolutely of equal Extent with the Knowledge that God hath? The Disciples use the same Expression before Christ died; *Now we are sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee.* And what do they conclude from this? that he was and must necessarily be himself the *Very God*? I am sure they do not tell us so: it follows in the Text, *By this we believe that thou camest forth from God, Joh. 16. 30.* This you will own is very different from saying, *By this we believe that thou art the One true God.*

And what if it shall plainly appear from Scripture that there was something that Christ did not know? Will not this be a sufficient Warrant for our putting a limited Interpretation upon a general Expression, which is so usual in other Cases, and frequent in all Languages? Now he himself tells us that he did not know the *Day of Judgment*; and in as plain words as can be, confines the Knowledge of that Particular to the *Father*, expressly excluding himself. The Words need no Comment, *Mark 13. 32. Of that day, and that hour, knoweth none, no, not the Angels which are in Heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. In Matt. 24. 36. the Words are—but my Father only.* Will you not say, 'Tis manifest enough to any whose pre-conceived Opinions do not turn them aside from the obvious sense of Scripture, that these Words of Christ do absolutely exclude from the Knowledge of this Particular every Person

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who is not the Father of Christ, and consequently the Son in any Capacity whatsoever? Unless they will say, that the Son may be understood to comprehend himself in some Capacity in that Expression, *My Father only*. You will suppose, it's likely, that they have somewhat to say to this Passage, which is so directly against their Doctrine. But the Case is so plain, I persuade my self you will excuse me the trouble of taking notice of the Shifts they use to get clear of this Difficulty: unless you have a mind to gratify your Curiosity in seeing how dextrous these Gentlemen can be upon occasion in finding out *nice Arts of Distinction to evade the sense of plain Words*, notwithstanding their frequent Cry of the plain obvious Sense of Scripture, &c. But you have had a Specimen of this already in the Turns they give to those *Texts* of Scripture which expressly speak of one God the Father. Indeed this Declaration of Christ, this Confession of his Ignorance (for surely we need not scruple to speak thus) was before his Ascension; and so was that Expression of the Disciples, *Joh. 16. 30. Now we are sure that thou knowest all things*. And if it were ever true of Christ in his *whole Person*, it must entirely overthrow our Friend's Argument. But you may observe also, that even after our Lord's Ascension he is represented as receiving a Revelation from God: so the Book called by this Name begins, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his Servants*—Shall we say after this, that the Scripture hath led us unavoidably into the Snare of taking Christ to be the One true God, because it speaks of his *knowing all things*, even the Hearts and Thoughts of Men?

Let me add to what hath been said, that when the Disciples speak of Christ's knowing all things, they plainly speak of a Knowledge that belonged to and resided in the *human Soul*; for that it was which spake to them, and they spake to him as *Man*. *Jesus knew all Men*: the Man Jesus knew what was in Man, and so could tell whom he might trust; see the Context, *Joh. 2. 24*. So in the other Passage mention'd by our Author, *Matt. 12. 25. Jesus knew their Thoughts*. The Man Jesus who spake to them knew their Thoughts: And this indeed is no more than a Prophet may do, as *Elisha* for instance. Not that we pretend to compare either Man or Angel to our Blessed Lord in point of Knowledge: only we observe, that *knowing the*
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Thoughts is not a Property *so peculiar to Godhead*, as that it may not be communicated; or that we must necessarily conclude concerning any one who is said to know the *Thoughts*, that he is *God*.

But our Author observes that Christ says, *All the Churches shall know that I am He that searcheth the Reins and the Heart, and I will give to every one of you according to your Works*: And Solomon he thinks hath plainly determin'd the Point, when he thus emphatically addresses himself to God, *Thou, even thou only, knowest the Hearts of all the Children of Men*. Here one would ask, Who it is that is meant? according to our learned Antagonists [*Thou*] must mean [*Thou essentially*]; not *Thou a single Person*, but [*Thou the Essence*], [*Thou the Godhead*] comprehending more Persons than one. *Solomon*, we grant, was a great Philosopher; how far he had studied *Metaphysicks*, we are not told in the Account we have of his great Proficiency in Knowledge. But if *Solomon* himself may be suppos'd to have understood these nice Distinctions, you will hardly believe that the People had any Notion of God taken *essentially*, and of God taken *personally*; but according to the plain Sense of Words they had been always us'd to, understood *Thou* to mean only a single Person. So in the Text quoted from *Rev.* where our Author remarks the *Emphasis* of the Expression: *Christ doth not say merely I can search the Hearts, &c. but, I am He that searcheth the Hearts—I am He*; is not this a Person? If then *Solomon's* Words relate to *Christ*, they prove that Christ was the Person to whom *Solomon* address'd, and that he only, and *no other Person*, searches the Hearts of the Children of Men. According to the Philosophy of our Adversaries, it should have been express'd in the *Neuter Gender* [*To ereunon*] the *Being* that searches; and not in the *Masculine* [*he that searches*]. What pity is it that the Sacred Writers were not more accurate in their Expressions? They every where without any Guard express themselves as intending a *Person*; this they do so constantly, that one can't help being tempted to think, that this nice Distinction between *Person* and *Being*, which is the main support of these Gentlemen's Scheme, never once enter'd into their Heads.

But let us consider these Texts according to the plain natural Import of them. *Solomon* addressing to God says, *Thou, even thou only, knowest the Hearts of all the Children*

of Men. What if we should say that Solomon did not then know that God had a Son possess'd of this Perfection? This we may presume will not be accounted by our Author and his Friends a Reflection upon Solomon, who was then under that *darker Dispensation*, when they had not an *explicit Knowledge of the Divine Persons, because they were not clearly reveal'd*. Or what if we should rather suppose, that he spake aright, and that what he said was really and exactly true? Our Author hath not yet produced any resistless Proof of the contrary, namely, that the Son of God, the Person of Christ, did at that time know the Hearts of all the Children of Men; nor do I know of any Proof he is able to produce, unless he would argue from his being the *true God*, which is here the Thing to be prov'd; and this would be plainly going in a Circle. Now you will easily perceive, that if it be true, that *then* God, even the Father, to whom Solomon address'd his Prayer, did alone know the Hearts of all the Children of Men; be it ever so plain that *now* another Person doth know the Hearts of all the Children of Men, this can be no Proof of that Person's being the *same God* as Solomon address'd to. But 'tis urged, *Christ says here, I am He that searcheth the Hearts, using, says our Author, the very Words of Jeremiah the Prophet (chap. 17. 9, 10. I the Lord search the Heart, I try the Reins, to give to every Man according to his Ways) as tho he would have said, That very Character of Godhead belongs to me, I am that Omniscient Being*. He should have said, if there be any Argument from comparing these Texts, *I am that Omniscient Person*. You see this Distinction between *Being* and *Person* was a very happy Invention, they cannot move one Step without it.

Let me now lay before you what I take to be a plain Account of these Words of Christ, with all their *Emphasis*. We know by the Gospel that God hath ordained Christ to be the Judge of the World, and that at the last Judgment the Secrets of all Hearts shall be laid open. Now that Christ refers to this, appears plainly from the Words following, *I will give unto every one of you according to his Works*. Or if this may relate to some Acts of Judgment previous to the Final and Universal Judgment, it is the same thing; for we know that *All Judgment is committed to him*, and this searching the Hearts hath manifestly a Reference to Judgment and Retributions. The Words there-
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ore do amount to no more than this, The Churches shall know that I am he who is ordained of God to be the Judge of all; and in order to the executing this Judgment, I search the Heart, &c. and so will render to every one according to his Works. In St. Paul's solemn Charge to Timothy, 2 Ep. 1. where he is speaking of Christ as Judge of quick and dead, you may observe an Emphasis in the Expression: I charge thee before God, and before the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge. (τὸ μέλλοντος κρίνειν, that Person who is to judge) the Quick and the Dead. Now should I argue; Christ is the Person who is to judge the Quick and the Dead, therefore he is the Person meant by St. Paul, whom he calls God, when he says, God shall judge the Secrets of Men by Jesus Christ, Rom. 2. 17. or thus, Christ is the Judge, therefore he is the Father, who without respect of Persons judgeth every Man, 1 Pet. 1. 17. it would be just such an Argument as this of our Author's; Christ says, I am he that searcheth the Heart, therefore Christ is that Jehovah, who says in Jerem. 17. the Lord search the Heart. But one would think the Scripture is plain enough, when it tells us, that God shall judge the World by Jesus Christ. And let it be observed, It is the Man Christ Jesus that shall judge the World; so St. Paul, in his Discourse to the Athenians, God hath appointed a Day in the which he will judge the World by the MAN whom he hath ordained. And if the Man be ordained of God to judge the World, it must undoubtedly be the Man that searches the Heart, to give unto every one according to his Deeds: and consequently, if this be a peculiar Property of Godhead, the Man is deified, the Manhood is become the Godhead.

The next Attribute our Author insists on as a distinguishing Perfection of God, is Omnipresence. This he reckons attributed to Christ, when it is said of him, that he filleth all in all, Eph. 1. ult. I am not perfectly satisfy'd in his applying those Words to Christ; but supposing them to be meant of Christ, we are to enquire what is intended by his filling all in all. If we will take the Apostle himself for our Interpreter, he seems to intend by it nothing more than the communicating all needful Gifts and Graces from God to the Church. See Chap. 4. of this Epistle, Ver. 8. &c. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led Captivity captive, and gave Gifts to Men. He that descended, is the same also that ascended above all Heavens, that he might fill all Things, Then

Then follows, *And he gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, &c.*

Another Proof of Christ's Omnipresence, is his Promise to be with his People. Matt. 17. 20. Chap. 28. ult. We know, in part at least, how this is accomplish'd; namely, by sending his Spirit to be with his People, John 16. 7. He knows in Heaven all the wants of his People; our Author himself seems to be of the Mind, that the human Soul of Christ is capable of this (t); and it may seem to be imply'd in what the Apostle speaks of his sympathizing with us, Heb. 4. 15. Now, inasmuch as he sends his Spirit according to his Promise, and gives *Help in every time of Need*, he may very justly be said to be with us, tho' we should not conceive him to be immense in the same manner as God is. I do not pretend to ascertain the Manner of Christ's being present with his People in this World. But this I say, that there is nothing spoken concerning this in the New Testament, that lays us under any Necessity of taking him to be that God, who in the Old Testament saith, *Do not I fill Heaven and Earth* (u)? Let any Man read what Christ says of himself, *I came forth from the Father, and am come into the World; again, I leave the World and go to the Father*; with many Passages of the same Nature: let him read those of the Apostle, *God hath made him Head over all things to the Church, which is his Body*—— Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended into the lower Parts of the Earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended far above all Heavens, that he might fill all things.— It pleased the Father, that in him all fulness should dwell. Would any Man, do you think, after reading these Passages, if he were not before prepossess'd, be in danger of being led by any of the Expressions our Author hath mention'd, to conclude, that Christ is one and the same God with

(t) P. 79.

(u) Certainly God's filling Heaven and Earth doth not exclude other Beings: If then it should appear, that the *Logos* is in the most strict and proper Sense present to the whole Creation, it will not follow that he is the same Being with God. See our Author's Confession, p. 98. It is not within our Reach to know how glorious and perfect a Creature God can make——'tis not for us to say, that it is impossible for any Being beneath a God to have any one of these Characters communicated to him.

with him who made him Head over all things, the same God with him to whom he ascended, and to whose good Pleasure it was owing, that all Fullness should dwell in him?

The Passage in *Genesis*, which our Author brings as a farther Confirmation of Christ's Immensity; *Jehovah rained Fire and Brimstone from Jehovah out of Heaven*; if it prove any thing concerning Two Persons, it will prove that there was one *Jehovah* on Earth, and another *Jehovah* in Heaven; and is so far from proving that he who is called *Jehovah* on Earth (upon the fore-mention'd Supposition) is immense, that it manifestly infers the contrary. Some primitive Writers have made use of this Passage for that Purpose. Tho' indeed it is no plain Evidence of Two Persons, but a way of Expression not unusual among the *Hebrews*, concerning one and the same Person; as some learned Commentators among the Trinitarians have freely acknowledg'd. Nor will our Author's parallel Text, as he calls it, (*John 3. 13.*) add the least Confirmation to his Sense of the fore-cited Passage: For it is well known that the *Participle* which we render in our Translation *who is*, is used indifferently, either for the present or past Time, according to the subject Matter of the Discourse. An Instance whereof we have in the same Gospel, Chap. 9. 25. where that which we render, *whereas I was blind*, according to the rendring in the former Place should be, *I who am blind* do now see: In like manner that which we render (*2 Cor. 8. 9.*) *tho he was rich*, is in the Original, *being rich*. Doth any one make a Difficulty of the Expression in these Passages? that which our Author thinks for his Purpose, would no doubt be as plain, were it not that he and those of his Mind, read it, prepossess'd with the Notion of *Two Natures* in Christ, the one finite, the other infinite.

The third Attribute he insists on, is *Omnipotence*. We shall not have much to do upon this Article. It lies upon our Author to show that the Title [*Pantocrator*] by which the sacred Writer seems to intend the absolute supreme Governour of all Things, is ever given to Christ in the *Book of the Revelation*: We say that it is the peculiar Title of the Father. We have already show'd that it belongs to him, *Ver. 8. of the 1st Chapter*; the same might be shown in some other Places. Let our Adversaries produce, if they can, any one Place where it shall appear to be given to Christ. The *Appearances* of God to the Patriarchs, have been consider'd

der'd before. That Christ hath Power to subdue all things to himself, is expressly asserted by the Apostle : But we deny that this is, or can be, a Proof of Christ's being one and the same God with him who gave him this Power ; or that there can be (reasonably) any danger from such Declarations, of any one's taking him for the Supreme God, when it is so plainly and so frequently declar'd, that he receiv'd this Power from another who is superior to him, and who is expressly stiled the *Only Potentate*.

The fourth Attribute is *Eternity*. He says, *Our Lord Jesus Christ hath the same Eternity that God hath*. But I can't imagine how he should reckon his first Text a Proof of this. *Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever*. Might he not as well prove, that the Saints have this distinguishing Perfection of God ; because the Scripture assures us, that they shall live for ever and ever ? The next Proof is, Christ's being called *Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last*. But how can he be the Last in respect of Duration, when our Being must continue as long as his ? Nor will the *Historical Eternity* of Melchizedeck (as our Author ingeniously calls it) prove an absolute Eternity of Christ. In that Christ had a Being before the World was, and consequently before the Beginning of Days, and shall live for evermore ; he doth plainly enough answer the *Historical Eternity* of Melchizedeck.

The fifth and last Attribute our Author insists on is, *Immutability*. God says, *I am the Lord, I change not* : It is said unto Christ, *Thou art the same, thy Years shall not fail*. Hence we are to infer, That Christ is that *Jehovah*, who said in *Malachi*, *I am the Lord, I change not*. Doth not our Author believe that it will be true concerning all the Saints after the Resurrection, that they shall be the same, and their Years shall not fail ? Will he thence infer, that they shall have the peculiar distinguishing Perfection of God, and together with Christ, shall then become the One God ?

We see then, that neither do any of those Attributes which are ascribed to Christ in the New Testament, infer any Necessity of our taking him for the *One true God*.

§. 23. The fourth Head of Argument is, that *Divine Works or Operations are ascribed to Christ*. He instances only in that of *Creation* ; and indeed a mighty Stress is generally laid upon it. The Argument in short is this : It is said again and again in the New Testament, that *All things were made*

by Christ: Now we know that *God* is the *Maker of all things*, and by that Character is he often described in the Old Testament: Therefore Christ is that God, who is revealed in *Genesis*, and throughout the Old Testament. This arguing might look very fair and plausible, had this been all that the Gospel says of this Matter; But when we read, that *God created all things by Jesus Christ*, that *By his Son God made the Worlds*; with due Deference to the many learned Men who have so much insisted upon it, I cannot but wonder at their Inference: for, indeed the just Inference from the Account we have in the Gospel concerning this Matter, is in my Apprehension the direct contrary. We read in the first Chapter of *Genesis*, that *God made the Heavens and the Earth*; and in consequence of this he is often described in the Old Testament by this Character or Title, *The Maker of Heaven and Earth*: In the New Testament we are told that *GOD created all things by Jesus Christ*, that *GOD made the Worlds by his Son*. Now they infer from Christ's making all things, that he is that *God* who is spoken of in *Genesis*, and throughout the Old Testament. What is this but to say, That Jesus Christ is *that God who made all things by Jesus Christ*, that The Son is *that God who made the Worlds by his Son*? On the contrary, I say, that since we are told in the New Testament, that *GOD* [he that is spoken of in the Old Testament] made all things BY JESUS CHRIST, and that Christ is the SON of that *GOD* who made the Worlds, it appears that Jesus Christ is not *that GOD* who is described in the Old Testament, as *The Maker of Heaven and Earth*, but is manifestly distinguished from him. Which of these two Inferences is the more just and natural, I leave to you or any Man that will speak impartially, to determine. We might now, I think, fairly dismiss this Head. But our Friend, it may be, will scarce think we do him Justice, if we do not take notice of the particular Texts he hath cited, and the following Remarks by which he would support and strengthen his Inference.

He observes, that *the Lord himself maintains this as his own Prerogative*, Isa. 44. 24. *I am the Lord that maketh all things, that stretcheth forth the Heavens alone, that spreadeth abroad the Earth by my self*. We may conceive that God speaks this, as excluding all Concurrence of those Gods, between whom and him the Competition then was: Or we may take the Words absolutely, as denoting God's making

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the World by his own Power, and not receiving Help from any other; which doth not deny another Person's acting in Subordination to him, as employed by him and ministering to him, as the Antients speak, and, as they stick not to express themselves, *receiving Orders* from him. Thus it's said with respect to God's bringing Israel out of Egypt, *The Lord alone did lead him*, Deut. 32. 12. Yet we know that he led them by the Hand of Moses, *Isa. 63. 12.* Yea, Moses also says, that the Lord had sent his Angel, and had brought them out of Egypt, Numb. 20. 16. It may then in a very proper Sense be said, that God stretched forth the Heavens alone, &c. and this not exclude another acting in Subordination to him. And therefore, when it is said in the beginning of St. John's Gospel, that all Things were made by the Word, it doth not follow that this Word is the very God spoken of in Genesis, and who is called in the Old Testament, *The Maker of Heaven and Earth.* Nor can they bring an Instance, that I know of, out of the whole Bible, where this Title, *The Maker of Heaven and Earth*, or the like, absolutely and by it self, is given to Christ; which would be much more to the Purpose than any of the Texts they alledge upon this Argument.

However, we will now particularly consider that Text in the beginning of St. John's Gospel, which is often urged in this Controversy, as it is here by our Author. *In the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* Now, what may we naturally suppose that either Jews or Gentiles would understand by [*Ho Theos*] *God with whom*, it's said, *the Word was*? Without doubt the Gentiles (I speak of such as had a Notion of the One God) would understand by that Term, the eternal necessary Being, the first Cause of all things; the Jews, the God who had revealed himself to their Fathers, the God that made the Heavens and the Earth, who is spoken of in the first Chapter of Genesis; to which the Evangelist plainly refers, when he says, *In the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God.* He adds, and the Word was *Theos* (not *Ho Theos*, as before) *a God.* Would either Jew or Gentile, think you, understand by this Title of *Theos* given to the Word, that he was that eternal necessary Being, that *Ho Theos*, with whom he was? One would scarce imagine there could be any danger of it. However, the sacred Writer (as if it were on purpose to prevent any such absurd Interpretation) immediately repeats it, *The same was with Ho Theos*; that no

Man might be tempted by the Evangelist's giving him the Title of *Theos* (*a God*) to understand it as if he meant to assert, that the *Word* was the very *Ho Theos* with whom he was; but one distinct from him whom the *Jews* stiled *GOD*, the Maker of Heaven and Earth, distinct from him whom the *Gentiles*, by way of Eminency, called *Ho Theos*, the eternal necessary Being, the first Cause of all things. It follows in the Evangelist, *By him were all Things made, and without him was not any thing made that was made*. This they usually urge as a Confirmation of their Notion; but I believe, Sir, upon due Consideration, you will judge with me, that it is rather a plain Evidence of the contrary; so indeed I take it to be. For had the Evangelist plainly declared in the foregoing Words (as they suppose) that the *Logos* was the very God, *Ho Theos*, what need could there be for saying, *That by him were all Things made*? Did not the *Jews* know and always acknowledge that *GOD* made all things? this was, it should seem, ordinarily the first Thing they took into their Notion of *GOD*. So the *Gentiles* (those of them who had the Notion of one God) did not they always understand this as intended by *Ho Theos*? So that all this which is so particularly added about the *Word's* making all things, seems to be perfectly superfluous, upon the Supposition of its being before plainly declar'd that he was *Ho Theos*. But now on the other Side, when we consider the Evangelist as describing a Person who was with God in the Beginning, of whom Men had little or no Notion before; it was highly proper to acquaint us, that this same Person was imploy'd in the Creation of the World. Men knew before that *GOD* made the World; but that he made the World by another glorious Person, who was then with him, was what they had little Apprehension of, as not having been (at least) *explicitly revealed* by the Old Testament: And this it was fit for us to know concerning this Person, seeing it was the very same Person who had now been made Flesh and dwelt among us. I think, upon the whole, it is abundantly manifest, that the Evangelist could never intend by these Words, that the *Logos* was himself that *GOD* whom *Jews* and *Gentiles* acknowledged as the first and necessary Being.

All that can be farther needful to clear up this Text, is to give some Account of the Title that is here given to the *Word*; how is it that he is called *Theos*, *a God*, if he be not really the One true God? Now we are to consider that this would not seem so strange to *Jews* or *Gentiles* in those

Times, when that Appellation was frequently by one and the other given to Beings or Persons that they knew very well were not absolutely supreme or infinitely perfect. In the Old Testament, *Magistrates* are called Gods, so are *Angels*: Our Lord himself takes notice of a Passage in the *Psalms* relating to the former; and by his Answer to the *Jews* doth, I think, sufficiently warrant us to take the Term *God* in a less perfect Sense when applied to him. I refer to those Words of his (in Answer to the *Jews* who had charged him with *making himself God*;) *If he called them Gods to whom the Word of God came.* This, at least, shews that the Title of *God* may be given, and the Term us'd, without implying such Person to be the supreme God. When the Title of *God* is given to any, it may be conceiv'd to import some things contained in the Idea or Notion of *God*, according to the strict and proper Sense of the Word; but it doth not, nor can it, take in all things contained in the Idea, when it is applied to any other than the One only true God. Thus, for Instance, Power and Authority belong to God; hence *Magistrates* are called Gods: So God says to *Moses*, *I have made thee a God unto Pharaoh.* He called them Gods, says our Saviour, *to whom the Word of God came*, i. e. who were commissioned by him, and in some respects acted as God, being (in the usual Phrase) his *Vice-gerents*. Angels may, perhaps, be called so upon this account; it may be also upon account of their partaking in a more eminent Degree of intellectual and moral Perfections, whereby they do more resemble God, as for this Reason they are called *Sons of God*. But upon any account whatsoever, on which we may suppose this Title to be given to others, there is none that can compare with Christ; and inasmuch as he hath, if I may so express it, *more of God* in him than Men or Angels ever had, he doth above all others deserve this Title, and is justly stil'd a God.

We have one more Text to consider, and that is *Heb. i. 10. Thou, Lord, in the Beginning hast laid the Foundation of the Earth, &c.* Some have question'd, whether those Words are there applied to Christ (x). But taking this for granted, what must we conclude from hence? that he is the same one GOD who spake in times past to the Fathers by the Prophets, and hath in these last times spoken to us by his Son,

(x) Vid. Examination of Dr. Benner's New Theory, p. 39.

son, whom he appointed Heir of all things, by whom also he made the Worlds? Is it not as plain as any thing can be, that he is the SON of that one GOD who had manifested himself in times past unto the Fathers by the Prophets? And when this Writer had before said, that *BY him GOD made the Worlds*, might he not reasonably expect that any thing he should say afterwards of his being concern'd in the Work of Creation, should be interpreted in a Consistency with what had been before declared, namely, his acting in Subordination to God.

But, Sir, put the Case now that it had been the Design of this Writer, to prove that Christ himself is the *most High God*, one God with the Father, can you imagine that he would have taken such a round-about way to prove it; and instead of declaring any such thing, speak after such a Manner as must naturally lead us to conceive otherwise, that is, speak of him as one distinct from GOD, the Son and Messenger of him who was acknowledged by the Fathers and the Prophets to be the *one only living and true God*? It is evident enough, that the sacred Writer did design in this Chapter, to raise our Apprehensions of the Dignity of Christ; surely he had done it at once in a much more effectual Way than that he hath taken, had he expressly declared, as these Gentlemen do now, that Christ is the same one God with the Father. Upon Supposition that this was then the known Doctrine of Christianity, and that the *Texts* our Friend hath produced from the Old Testament, are such obvious Proofs of it as he would represent them; I am afraid, Sir, you would be strongly tempted to think our *Apostle's* Discourse here very insipid, weak, and trifling. To how much better purpose, and with how much more convincing over-bearing Light could our *Trinitarians* argue this Point from the Old Testament, than the *Apostle* doth? They could directly prove that Christ is that *Jehovah* who made a Covenant with *Abraham*, who said to *Moses*, *I am that I am*; that he was the *God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, the God whom they and their Posterity in succeeding Generations always worshipped as the supreme God, &c. How poor, how low doth it appear in comparison of this, to shew that Christ hath obtained a more excellent Name than the Angels; because God never said to any of them, *I will be to him a Father and he shall be to me a Son*? How weak and mean in comparison of what these Gentlemen

men could produce upon the Subject, to tell us, that God commanded all the Angels to worship him; which might rather tempt one to suppose that the Angels did not know him to be the supreme God: for could they need a positive Command to put them upon worshipping him whom they had always worshipped as the supreme God, and who upon that very Account had as good a Claim to their Worship as he who commanded them to worship him? Would these Gentlemen bring no better Proof of his being the Most high God, than a Passage, where indeed he hath the Title of God (a thing not strange among the Jews) but at the same time there is mention of another who is God above him, from whom he receives all his Dignity and Honour? And finally, would they have produced a Text wherein is ascribed to him the Work of Creation, in such manner as to leave it to be understood of his acting only in *Subordination* to the One GOD, who had spoken in times past to the Fathers, without the least Hint that this was designed as a Proof of his being the same one God? In short, I cannot but think, that if any one should first read our Friend's Arguments in this Book, and afterwards come to read the *Apostle's* Dissertation in this Chapter, he would never imagine that it was the Design of our *Apostle* to prove the same Point. If this were the Design, who will not say that our Friend hath vastly out-done the *Apostle*?

But our Author hath brought up in the Rear of this Argument four auxiliary Remarks. We must try whether they be of Force sufficient to support it. He observes in the first Place, that *The Way whereby God creates all things, is by his Word; and 'tis in the same Manner that our Lord Jesus Christ is said to uphold all things, (viz. in the Chapter we have just now been treating of) Upholding all things by the Word of his Power.* But what if we should say that the Person refer'd to in that Expression, *his Power*, is God who made the Worlds by his Son? I am apt to think our Author would find some difficulty in proving the contrary. I leave it to those who can look into the Original to judge, whether this may not be thought agreeable to the natural Construction. But that we may not be thought contentious, we will allow the Expression to refer to the Son. And we may say, that as the *Father hath given him to have Life in himself, Joh. 5. 26. and he quickneth whom he will; so the Father hath given him to have Power in himself, whereby*

he upholds all Things: Will it therefore follow that he is the same One God with him from whom he received that Life and that Power?

He observes in the second Place, *that as God is the first Cause of all created Beings, so he is the last End of all; even so all Things were created for Christ, as well as by him, Col. 1. 16, 17.* We say sometimes that all Things were made for Man; not that we intend thereby that Man was absolutely the last End of all. All things were created for Christ, for his Service and for his Glory. But may there not yet be a higher End, namely, the *Glory of God the Father*? The Apostle more than once represents this Gradation, ending in GOD as being absolutely the last End. *The Head of every Man is Christ, the Head of the Woman is the Man, and the Head of Christ is God, 1 Cor. 11. 3.* We may say in some Sense, that all things are for the Church, or so the Apostle in the same Epistle, Chap. 3. *latter End, All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's.* See also *Phil. 2. God hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name above every Name, that at the Name of Jesus every Knee should bow, whether things in Heaven or things on Earth, or things under the Earth, and confess that he is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father.* We see then how it may very justly be said, that all things were created by him and for him, and yet this be no Proof that he is himself that invisible God whose Image he is, and according to whose good Pleasure it was that all Fulness dwelt in him, as you find in that same Chapter of the Epistle to Coloss. In short, it may be truly said, that *All things were created by him and for him;* and yet it plainly appears from the same Context as well as from other Scriptures, that there is one prior to him as the efficient Cause, and one beyond him as the ultimate End.

His third Remark is, *That Creation is such a peculiar Work of God, that his Existence or Being, his very Nature, Power and Godhead, are certainly and infallibly inferred from it, as the Apostle assures us, Rom. 1. 20.* The invisible things of God from the Creation of the World are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal Power and Godhead. You will easily perceive that these Words mean no more than this, That the Work of Creation is a manifest Proof of an eternal self-existent Being. Whether the World we see was made by him immediately, or by another in Subordination to him, doth not at all concern the Ar-

Argument. But let us hear our Author: *If, says he, any Being that had not eternal Power and Godhead could create a World, then St. Paul's Argument is feeble, and falls to the Ground; then the visible Things of the World do not prove the Existence of an invisible, eternal, and Almighty God.* We need do no more in Answer to this, but to confront it with his own Concession at the Conclusion of his Proofs, (p. 98.) "It is not within our Reach, to know how far the Powers of a Creature can go—'Tis not for us to say, that in the Nature of Things, it is utterly impossible for any Being beneath a God to have any one of these Powers or Characters communicated to him." If this Concession be just, then according to the foregoing Position our Author hath proved, that *St. Paul's Argument is feeble and falls to the Ground*; for here you see the Light of Reason cannot assure us, that it is impossible for a Being who had not eternal Power and Godhead to create a World. Either the foresaid Position must fall to the Ground, or the Apostle's Argument, or our Author must revoke his Concession. He hath his Choice of the Three, but one of them he must take. I see no need of the last, I dare say he will not take the Second; but I think he may, if he pleases, very well give up the first: for the Things that are made, do indeed prove the Existence of an invisible, eternal, and necessary Being, who had originally in himself Power to create a World. Whether he communicated Power to another to do it, or did it immediately by himself, is a Question altogether foreign to the Argument, and according to the fore-mentioned Concession, *not within the Reach* of any Man to determine without a Revelation.

Our Author's last Remark doth not at all concern those who believe that Christ was before the World began, and that by him God made the Worlds. And now, Sir, I may venture to say, that with all the Help of these four Remarks our Author's Argument from what the Scripture says of Christ's *Making all things* is yet feeble, and far from being a *resistless Proof* of Christ's being the One God, the Maker of Heaven and Earth, who had made himself known to the Jews by the Old Testament; and indeed, that it appears plainly from the New Testament, that he is the SON of the one GOD who spake to the Fathers by the Prophets, and that GOD made the Worlds by him.

§. 24. We come now to the last Argument, viz. That *Divine Worship is ascribed to Christ* (y). There is no one Argument upon which our Adversaries are wont to make a greater Triumph; what ground they have for it, you will judge when we have consider'd what they offer upon this Head. *Religious Worship*, says our Author, *is so peculiar a Prerogative of God, that he will by no means suffer any meaner Being to share in it. He assumes this Character to himself with a Divine Jealousy, lest any thing beneath God should partake of it.* For this he refers to some Passages in the Old Testament, and observes that our Lord cites Deut. 10. 20. saying, *It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*, Matt. 4. 10. He adds, *The best Command doubtless includes this meaning, Thou shalt have no other Gods before me, i. e. no other Objects of Worship.* I have this short Reply to make to all the Texts of this Nature: Let our Author and his Friends tell us, who it is that speaks thus in the Old Testament, or who is that Object to whom Religious Worship is so expressly confin'd; is it one Person? then let them look to themselves who profess to worship Three. Or, is that Object the Three Persons? how doth that appear? You may remember, Sir, that we have before demonstrated, that it was the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was the God of the Jews; that it was the Father singly and exclusively, who said, *I am Jehovah, my Glory will I not give unto another*: so that these Words do exclude every other Person as well as every other Being. Well then, if this be so; we are, for ought I can see, upon as perfectly good a Foot as they: if They can make shift to get clear of these Texts, We may too. That which will open them a Door for the bringing in an *Equal* Worship of the Son, will certainly make way for us to bring in an *Inferior* Worship.

A peculiar Stress is laid upon *Christ's* citing those Words of Deut. *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, &c.* and so confirming (as they imagine) the severe Prohibitions of the Old Testament. When the Devil tempted Christ to fall down and worship him, Christ replies: *It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* Now I would ask our Friend, Who was this Lord God?

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was it not *Christ's* God, whom he himself was to serve, and whom indeed he actually did worship, frequently praying and giving thanks to him? Was *Christ* himself the *Lord God* here spoken of, whom *Christ* himself was to worship? yet is it said, **HIM ONLY** shalt thou serve. If then these Words do exclude every other Object from all Religious Worship, they must of necessity exclude *Christ* also; unless they will say, He was the Object of his own Worship. And if this may be suppos'd, then must the [*Him only*] spoken of in the Text, comprehend Two [*He's*] *i. e.* both the Father and *Christ*; yea, and in *Christ* himself there will be also two [*He's*] one the Worshipper, the other the Object of that Worship. I hope, Sir, that by this time you are satisfy'd, that those terrible *Texts* do bear no harder upon us than they do upon them: and if they can reconcile *Christ's* citing those Words from the Old Testament, with his declaring expressly afterwards, *That it is the Will of his Father, that all Men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father*; we have nothing more to do, but to see what is the Honour we are to give to the Son, and pay it accordingly.

But I would not willingly leave you under any hard Thoughts of our *Scriptures*, as if they were not well consistent with themselves; and therefore shall endeavour to give you a plain Account of this Matter, and then leave you to judge of the Force of this boasted Argument.

It was undoubtedly one great Design of God in separating the People of *Israel* from the rest of the Nations, to keep up the Knowledge of the *One true God* in the World, and to secure a Worship to himself; therefore he severely forbids the worshipping any other, *i. e.* confines all Religious Worship (z) to himself. Those Commands, in the
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(z) It is very rare to find the Writers upon this Subject giving any distinct Account of what they mean by *Religious Worship*, as distinguish'd from Civil Respect. Dr. *Waterland*, indeed, in his celebrated Argument upon this Head (*Query 16, &c.*) tells us, that *God hath determin'd it to mean the Divinity, Supremacy, Eternity, &c. of the Object*. He would have this taken for a *Principle*, and then argues from it that *Religious Worship* can belong only to the supreme God. Who will dispute it, if that be what is intended by *Religious Worship*? But is not this plainly begging the Question? (Of this by and by) It seems to me that *Religious Worship* imports our expressing a
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most strict Sense, without any Exception, were to be in force till the Son of God himself should come, the *Prophet* whom *Moses* spake of, whom they were to hear in all Things whatsoever he should say unto them. When he comes, he assures us that it is the Will of his Father, that all Men should honour the Son as they honour the Father; and the Apostles tell us afterwards, that God had glorified his Son, having raised *Jesus* from the dead, and exalted him by his own Right Hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give Repentance and Remission of Sins. Now, were it so that we had no positive Precept or Example in the New Testament to warrant our Worship of Christ, our Author will tell us, that the very Reason of Things leads us to adore him, and gives sufficient Foundation to pray to him for what Gifts or Graces we want, and to praise and give him Thanks for what we have received; for so he speaks with respect to the Spirit (a). And, again, more fully to our Purpose (b): If there be any mere Creature, to whom I can certainly communicate the Knowledge of my Wants, who has also Power to supply them, and has a particular Office or Appointment for this End, surely all the Light of Reason and Scripture lead me to address him by Petition for a Supply, and to give him Thanks for what I have receiv'd. Now we believe as much as this concerning our Blessed Lord, surely then our Author himself will justify us in praying to him and giving him Thanks, tho we do not pay him Worship absolutely supreme. And since he here asserts, that surely all the Light of Reason and SCRIPTURE leads us to address him by Petition, &c. tho he were a mere Creature; we may hope that he will no

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Dependance, on, or making Acknowledgment to some other Being as Superior to Man. There might be the same outward Signs of this Worship as of Civil Respect, such as *Bowing*, *Kneeling*, &c. and there might be the same immediate Acts, as asking Favours, returning Thanks, &c. which no doubt are allowable between Man and Man. But all direct expressions of Respect and Homage to other Beings as of a superior Nature, and having Power over us, whether visible or invisible; I take to be properly *Religious Worship*. And this was forbidden absolutely under the Old Testament: this would have been accounted the worshipping another God, tho they did not acknowledge the Being they worshipped to be *supreme*, *eternal*, *immutable*, &c. which indeed in most Instances could never be suppos'd.

(a) P. 96.

(b) P. 222.

more insist on it, that the giving him *Worship* is a Proof, either in Reason or by Scripture, that he is *God*; unless it be in such Sense as a *Creature* may be *God*. Well, it is some Satisfaction that we have seen our Adversary justifying us in that very thing which sometimes he would represent as a very heinous and dangerous Crime, and taking off with his own Hand, that which he once thought to be so heavy a Load upon our Doctrine; and in short giving up at once this mighty and (as they are wont to represent it) invincible Argument.

But, possibly, our Author will rather chuse to retract these later Assertions than give up his former Argument. Be that as it will. We go upon better Authority, the Intimations of our Lord himself, the Practice of the Apostles, the Command of God even to Angels, and the Representation we have in Scripture of the whole Universe joining together in adoring our Saviour. By the same Authority which enjoined the Church under the Old Testament to worship the *Lord, and him only*, we now honour the *Son as well as the Father*. They worshipped the *Father*; it is plain from our Lord's Discourses, and from the Apostles, that they worshipped the *Father only*; we now worship both *Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and the Lamb* too. Under the Old Testament there was *One Object* of Worship, now there is revealed to us another Object, whom they knew not, at least not as a distinct Object of direct Worship. For as to what our Author affirms (p. 72. and again p. 77.) that our Lord Jesus Christ was worshipped *as the true God, as the Lord Jehovah, as the supreme God* by the Patriarchs, when he appeared to them in a visible Shape; it appears to have no Foundation in Scripture, as hath been shewn; nay, is, I think, manifestly repugnant to the Account that our Lord himself and the Apostles have given us of the *Object of Worship* under the Old Testament. And truly had it been as our Friend continually represents it, one would think that Christ should rather have said, that henceforth all Men should honour *the Father as well as the Son*; since according to the Representation our Author hath given us, it was the Son who had always been honoured, and the Father not at all.

We do grant then, that we worship one besides the supreme God: They say, this is *Idolatry*. Let them give it what Name they please, we maintain that we have sufficient Warrant for it. No, say they; *God appropriates all Wor-*
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ship to himself. Where doth he appropriate all Worship to himself? In the *Old Testament*. We say then that they are *Idolaters* as well as we; since it hath been undeniably prov'd, that they worship another besides *Him*, who did appropriate all Worship to himself under the *Old Testament*. And if it be included (as our Author says it is) in the *first Command*, that we should have *no other Object of Worship*, we say that *Command* is *so far* repeal'd; even as the fourth *Command* in the *Decalogue*, so far as concerns that *seventh Day* which the *Jews* were requir'd to keep as their *Sabbath*.

We farther observe for our Vindication, that there are manifestly two distinct Objects of Worship, and a distinct Worship given to One that cannot be given to the Other, and the Worship of one refer'd to the Glory of another. You will wonder to see how Men study to perplex a plain Matter. We are told by the Defenders of the Trinitarian Doctrine, that there is and can be but *one Object of Religious Worship*, and that is the *divine Nature*; that there is but *one Worship*, and can be no other; that all Religious Worship hath *one significancy*; that it means *whether we will or no*, it means by *divine Institution and Appointment*, the *Divinity*, the *Supremacy*, the *Sovereignty of the Object* (c). But, Sir, what did you and others you have convers'd with, always un-

(c) *Waterland's Quer.* p. 239, &c. This is the main Foundation of all his arguing. And this, as far as I can perceive, is built solely upon this Observation, that God usually describes himself as *supreme*, *immutable*, &c. when he requires Men to worship him only. Those Characters are undoubtedly very proper Considerations to engage their Observance of the Command, but are far from proving, that Worship doth in the very Nature of the Act imply such Perfections in the Object. What if we should suppose God so describing himself, at the same time that he should require the subordinate Worship of another; would there be any Inconsistency in this? is it a Contradiction to make such a Supposition? If he shall say, that God by appropriating this Act to himself, hath thereby determin'd it to signify, the Ascribing all Perfections; who doth not see that this is going in a Circle? God hath appropriated all Worship; therefore all Worship hath this significancy, that the Object is supreme, &c. and then, all Religious Worship hath this significancy, that the Object is supreme, &c. therefore it can belong only to God. I would only beg leave to ask the Doctor one Question, Whether he thinks *St. John* had this Notion of the only meaning of Worship, when he fell down to worship

understand to be the Object of Worship? an abstract Nature, or rather a Person? What did the Jews, think you, understand to be the Object of Worship when they worshipped the *Father*? I may appeal to the common Sense of Mankind; don't they always apprehend that it is some Person they worship? And now, if one Person was worshipped before, and we are afterwards directed to worship another Person, are not here *Two Objects* of Worship? Moreover, here are Acts of Worship to one, that cannot be directed to the other. When I give thanks to *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual Blessings in heavenly Places in Christ*—— *who hath translated us into the Kingdom of his dear Son*; is this to the same Object, as when I ascribe Glory to *Him who hath loved us and washed us from our Sins in his own Blood, and made us Kings and Priests to God and his Father*? The Father is worshipped through a Mediator; the Son not through a Mediator. The Son is worshipped as Mediator; the Father cannot be worshipped as Mediator. Don't you see plainly that here is Worship paid to Two Persons; Worship to one Person, that cannot be given to the other? Yet they will bear us down, that there is still but *One Object and One Worship*. Surely never was there a matter so plain in it self, so confounded, as these Men have confounded this Subject of Worship, to serve their Hypothesis.

In Religious Worship there is, says our Author, *no mention made of two Sorts or Degrees of it*. Have we not as plain an Instance of these two Sorts as can be, when we are told that *every Knee shall bow at the Name of Jesus, and confess that he is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father*? Is not here a Difference, when the Honour given to one is refer'd to the Glory of the other as the ultimate End? If there be no Difference, then may they as well bow to God the Father, and confess that he is Lord *to the Glory of Jesus*. But will they dare to do this? I hope not. What need was there that the Scripture should expressly tell us of this Distinction, when it appears in the Nature of the Thing, and 'tis in a manner impossible but

ship the Angel? Can it be thought that he should twice be guilty of an Attempt to *deify* the Creature? So it must be, if he understood this to be the meaning of every Act of Worship, (the Doctor supposes that it was *Religious Worship* he offer'd to the Angel) unless he took this Angel to be *God himself*, which there is no ground to suppose.

out that we should, at least in fact, make the Distinction? Can I have the same Veneration of Mind (which is the very Essence of Worship) the same high Esteem for Him who is exalted, as I have for Him who hath exalted him, and is the Fountain, the Author and Bestower of that Dignity and Blessedness to which he is advanced, and by whose Authority and Command it is that I give Glory to him? *The Father hath committed all Judgment to the Son, that all Men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father*: Is there not in these very Words a visible Foundation for a Difference, in the Honour I must give to these Two Persons? But when I am farther told, that this Son shall reign the Kingdom and Authority he is now invested with, and be himself subject to God who put all Things under him; can I give the same Honour, the same Worship (considering this as an Act of the Mind) to him who hath all Things put under him by the Power of another, as I give to that other who put all Things under him, and to whom even this Person whom I now worship must himself be subject?

If all Worship be *supreme*, and the Worship paid to our Saviour be proper Divine Worship, as our Author contends; how is it that he supposes the *human Soul of Christ may share in the Thanks and Praises that ascend from the Saints on Earth, and partake of the Honour done to his whole sacred Person* (d)? Are there *Circumstances of Honour that are not purely divine, and incommunicable in Acts of Worship*, that are proper divine Worship? He says, *We have no Warrant to divide the Human Nature from the Divine in the Honours which we pay unto him*; if then the human Soul have any Share, either there must be somewhat in the Worship of Christ that is not proper Divine Worship, or else our Author must own that he gives proper divine Worship to that which is not God. What he hath said there of the *Soul of Christ partaking of the Honours done to his Person*, appears to me as the Sally of a pious Gratitude to the Redeemer breaking through the Restraints of Prejudice; for it is indeed what his Argument doth not allow of. And this, I doubt not, is frequently the Case with pious Souls: In their Disputes they are forced many times to exclude the *Man* Christ Jesus from that Honour which by the Appointment of the Father is due to him, and which he hath so highly deserved

served of us; yet in the actings of their Mind they do give Honour, and Glory, and Blessing to the *Lamb that was slain*, and without doubt are accepted in the sincerity of their Desires, notwithstanding the Confusedness of their Speculations.

Another Objection of our Author against an Inferior or Subordinate Worship is, *That this would be in effect to establish Heathenish Superstition and Idolatry, which it was the Design of the Gospel to abolish.* Would it not grieve one (if it may not move one's Indignation) to see Christians representing the Worship of Christ, the only true and proper Worship which the Gospel directs us to pay unto him, as little better than *Heathenish Idolatry*; and thus in effect making the Man Christ Jesus, the *one Mediator between God and Men*, whom God hath exalted, and to whom God hath given a Name above every Name, that at the Name of Jesus every Knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things on Earth, and things under the Earth; and that every Tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord: to see, I say, this Blessed Jesus represented as no better than an *Idol*, and the worshipping him ranked with the Idolatries of the Heathens? Is there then no Difference? or are these so near a-kin, the worshipping Him whom God hath exalted, and who hath a Name given to him above every Name that is named not only in this World, but in that which is to come (tho he be not worshipped as Supreme God) and the worshipping of an *Idol that is nothing in the World*, or the *sacrificing to Devils*; are these, I say, so near a-kin, that the one cannot be allow'd of without encouraging the other? Such Arguments as these need rather the serious Reflection of those who make use of them, than a direct Confutation from an Adversary.

Our Author adds (as is common upon this Head) that *it is the Godhead of Christ that is the standing and eternal Ground of all that Religious Worship which we are bound to give him.* Yet, alas, the Scripture takes no notice of this, never recommends the Worship of Christ upon this Account; nor is there any one Instance where it appears that he was worshipped as the Supreme God. The Scripture plainly puts it upon another foot: *The Father hath committed all Judgment to the Son, that all Men should honour him. God hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name above every Name, that at the Name of Jesus every*

Knee should bow, and every Tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father. God hath commanded, saying, Let all the Angels of God worship him. And they sung a new Song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the Book, and to open the Seals; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy Blood. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive Power, &c. Strange! that the only Foundation and formal Reason, the standing and eternal Ground of all the Religious Worship we are bound to give him, should be so entirely overlook'd in all the Directions about it, in all the Instances of it; especially, when without a Regard to this (according to our Author's Principles) worshipping him would be little better than Heathenish idolatry.

I think there is nothing more suggested by our Author under this Head, that needs to be consider'd. And now, Sir, having seen what is the Worship of Christ that we are directed to in the New Testament, and which was practis'd by the Apostles, &c. judge you, whether *those Honours done to our Lord Jesus would be so many Affronts to the Supreme Majesty and Dignity of the Blessed God the Father, if Jesus Christ were not one and the same God with him?* Should you not rather conclude, that if he were indeed one and the same God with the Father, and this were the only Ground and Foundation of the Worship and Honours that are to be paid to him, such Instances of Worship, and such Directions about it, (where there is not the least notice taken of his Divinity, and all the Honour paid to him is entirely put upon another foot) would be *so many Affronts to his own Supreme Majesty and Dignity?*

§. 25. We should now proceed to consider the Proofs our Author hath brought for the *Divinity of the Holy Ghost*. But I suppose you will easily excuse me the Trouble of entering into a particular Discussion of his Arguments upon this Head. He is willing to suppose, that if the true and proper Godhead of Christ be fully prov'd, we will easily give him in that of the Holy Spirit: I may, I suppose, with as good reason conclude on the other side, that if the true and proper Godhead of Christ (in our Author's Sense) cannot be prov'd, much less will the Godhead of the Spirit be admitted; which, as he himself observes, hath not *half so many Proofs in Scripture*. And

I suppose he does not think, that among them that are to be met with in Scripture, there are any of greater Force and more evidently resistless, than those which are brought for the Proof of the Godhead of Christ. If there be any Difference, I am apt to think that the Proofs he hath given us of the *Divinity of the Spirit* have (most of them) much less Appearance of Argument. And indeed by the same way of arguing which our Author sometimes makes use of under this Head, a Man might, if he were so dispos'd, undertake to prove that *Moses* is God, and that *David* is God; yea, and that *Satan* is God; because we find in one place of Scripture the same Things attributed to *Moses*, to *David*, and to *Satan* himself, which in other places are attributed God. And thus we might prove, that the Holy Spirit is God the Father, and that Christ is the Son of the Holy Ghost, or that Christ is the Father, or that the Holy Spirit is Christ. In like manner might one prove, that when *Joseph* was cast into Prison, he and the rest of the Prisoners were one and the same Person, or at least one and the same Being, because it is said in Scripture, that *whatsoever they did there, He was the Doer of it*, Gen, 39. 22. But what more common than this, viz. when some act in Subordination to another, to attribute the same Effect, sometimes to the Principal Agent, sometimes to such as were employed by him and acted under him?

There is one Thing comes under this Head which was not taken notice of in the Argument of Christ's Divinity, and that is, the being *Baptized in the Name of the Son and of the Holy Ghost*. Our Author did prudently in reserving it for this Place, because otherwise he would have been at a loss for an Instance of Divine Worship paid to the Holy Spirit. Now he thinks that the *joining them with the Father in this initiating Ordinance*, would seem to have a very broad Appearance of Idolatry, if the Son and the Holy Ghost were not the same God, and so have been an invincible Stumbling-block both to Jews and Gentiles (e). It is certain our Lord took no care to prevent the Stumbling-block our Author is so concern'd about, by any Intimation of *their* being one and the same God in the Form he prescribed, or in his Institution of the Ordinance;

nor

nor do we meet with any the least Hint of this from the *Apostles* when they administer'd this Ordinance. Nay, (which is more) there seems to be in the Account we have of the first Institution, a plain Intimation of an *Inferiority* of the Son, in that he grounds the Commission he gives to the Disciples upon a Power received from the Father. See *Matt.* 28. 18, 19. *Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All Power is given unto me in Heaven and in Earth; Go ye therefore and teach all Nations, baptizing them, &c.* We may conclude then, that this would be no Stumbling-block at all. Nor do I see how it should be any Difficulty, either to *Jews* or *Gentiles*, to profess their believing in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ whom he had sent, and in the Holy Spirit whom the Father would send in Christ's Name upon them who embraced his Doctrine. Might they not thus believe in Christ and in the Holy Ghost, without believing *Christ* and the *Spirit* to be the same one God with the Father? The *Jews* might still continue to *abhor Idols*, and yet become the Disciples of Christ, and make solemn Profession of it in Baptism; tho they did believe him to be inferior to the Father, and sent by him. *Christianity* might answer its main Design, and root out Idolatry from among the *Gentiles*, in turning them from *Idols* to the living God; tho they did not believe Christ himself to be that *Living God*, but the *Son* of that living God to whom they turned. See *1 Thess.* 1. 9. This is our Author's main Argument to prove *Divine Worship* paid to the Spirit, such divine Worship as might evince that he is the *One God*.

He adds as a farther Confirmation, that the *Apostle* prays for the Blessing of the Holy Spirit to descend on the *Corinthians*. But who doth not see a Difference between this and *Praying to* the Holy Ghost for his Blessing? He says also, that it seems evident that the *Holy Spirit* was worshipped in some of those Texts which he had cited before from the *Old Testament* (*Isa.* 6. *Psal.* 97.) But it seems, this Evidence did not make any great Impression upon our Author himself; for he seems to have entirely forgot it, when he says afterwards (p. 219.) *I confess, we cannot find in Scripture any such positive and express Precepts, or Examples of Petition or Praise, so directly addressed to the Holy Spirit, as there are to the Father and the Son; and thereupon gives us some Reasons why we might not expect this.* And again, p. 232. he acknowledges an entire Silence

in Scripture of any express Precepts or Pattern of Prayer or Praise directed distinctly to the Person of the Blessed Spirit.

But to make up for the Deficiency of Scripture, he hath recourse to the Light of Reason : p. 96. *Since it is he who enlightens, &c. the very Reason of things leads us to adore him.* Our Author forgot here that he was to prove the Spirit to be God, from the Scripture's attributing to him the peculiar Prerogatives of God. And if that plain Reason which our Author gives elsewhere, p. 237. be a good Reason, viz. that if there be any mere Creature to whom I can certainly communicate the Knowledge of my Wants — both Reason and Scripture lead me to address him by Petition, &c. If this, I say, be a good Reason for worshipping a mere Creature ; then certainly, had we never so plain Instances of Prayer, &c. addressed to the Spirit, they could be no Proofs of his being the One God. But that was spoken when our Author was concerned to justify the common Practice among them; and in pleading for that he seems so far to have forgot himself as to overturn his former Argument. Our Concern at present is not so much about their Practice, as about the Argument. Tho I cannot but pity our Friend in this Distress; that he should be constrain'd, in order to justify himself and his Brethren in their practice of worshipping the Spirit, to have recourse to an Argument that utterly overthrows the Inference he had drawn from it before : He had brought this in among the resistless Proofs of the Divinity of the Spirit, That he hath that Worship paid to him which God claims in his Word as his peculiar Prerogative; afterwards finding himself hard put to it for Scripture Evidence, he would help out the Matter by Reason : but it falls out unluckily, the Argument by which he would prove that Worship is due to the Spirit, proves that this Worship it self can be no Evidence of his Divinity.

Would you not think it strange that Men should acknowledge the Scripture to be given to them to direct them in their Worship (f), and yet at the same time plead for a Worship for which they own they have neither Precept nor Example in Scripture, and only appeal to the Reason of things for it? Is not this to be wise above what

is

is written? However, our Author is so modest as not to bind it upon our Conscience: *Since we find, says he, no great a Silence in Scripture of any express Precepts or Patterns of Prayer or Praise directed distinctly to the Person of the Blessed Spirit, let us not bind it upon our own Consciences, nor others, as a piece of necessary Worship.* Yet before he had said that *both the Light of Reason and Scripture lead us to address him by Petition, &c.* (g) Surely, if both the Light of Reason and Scripture lead us to address him, we ought to look upon it as a piece of necessary Worship. But notwithstanding this, he thinks it more convenient generally to forbear it: *Is it not better, in our most common and usual Addresses to God, to follow the express Directions and Examples of Scripture, and imitate the inspired Apostles, those first and most glorious Christians* (h)? Why does he say here, only in our most common and usual Addresses? I should think it were better to follow the express Directions and Examples of Scripture, &c. in All our Addresses. Thus are Men embarrass'd and entangled, when they find themselves under a Necessity of vindicating a Practice deviating from their own avowed Rule; when they dare not give up their only Rule, and yet for certain Reasons are resolv'd to maintain a Practice which by that Rule they have no Warrant for. I would desire our Author at his leisure to ask himself, whether he can suppose that the inspired *Apostles, those first and most glorious Christians*, did not understand what both the Light of Reason and Scripture leads to? or, whether he can persuade himself that in the many *Doxologies* we meet with in the New Testament (of which he hath given a Collection) they could have so entirely forgot the *Blessed Spirit*, if they had judg'd with him that both the *Light of Reason and Scripture lead us to address him*? I would desire him to consider, whether there can be an higher Instance of *Will-worship* (a Charge which those of his Party have heretofore brought with great warmth against the Establish'd Church) than the setting up an *Object of Worship* which the Scripture hath not directed us to, which is indeed the very Instance of *Will-worship* that the Text they insist on expressly takes notice of and censures.

But to return to the Argument (leaving our Author to
prac-

practise occasionally as (i) *Prudence and Expedience may require.*) Can you persuade your self, that if the Holy Spirit were the One God, and had upon that account as just a Claim to the highest Acts of Worship as the Father himself hath, he should be so entirely forgot in all the Instances of Worship; that there should not be left in Scripture (which was given to direct our Worship) so much as one plain Command for the Worship of the Spirit, nor any Account of the Practice of it (k)? Can you think that his Honour should be so neglected? You see we are allowed by our Author (so little can he find in Scripture to countenance it, much less require it) still to neglect him in our solemn Worship, unless for *prudential Reasons* some shall see fit now and then to take notice of him (l).

Our Author hath made an Argument as well as he could for the Divinity of the Holy Spirit from the Topick of *Divine Worship*, tho he is forced to own that there is no such thing as *Precept or Example in Scripture of any direct Worship paid to him.* Now, Sir, I desire that you would judge with your self, whether that which our Author hath produc'd upon this Head be of greater Force to prove his Divinity; or, the utter Silence of Scripture, and passing him by in all Acts of Worship, do give more Reason to suppose that he is not the *One God who is blessed for ever.*

In the Conclusion of these Arguments our Author grants, that for any thing we could know by the Light of Reason, there might be an inferior Being, one *beneath a God, a Creature* capable of all these great high Things that are ascribed to Christ: so that by his own Confession, his Arguments owe all their Force to God's having *assumed these Properties, these Works, this Worship, and peculiarized them to Himself in his Word* (m). Tho sometimes he seems to have forgot that this was the only Foundation of his Argument; but this doth not now concern us. If then we have made it appear, (as I hope you are satisfy'd we have) that there are none of those things which are *truly* ascribed to Christ or to the *Holy Spirit*, so peculiarized by God to Himself as to exclude every inferior Being from partaking in them; in short, If notwithstanding all that the Scripture doth really ascribe to Christ or to the Spirit, God hath still suffi-

(i) P. 232. (k) P. 224. (l) P. 224, 233. (m) P. 98, 99.

sufficiently distinguished himself in his Word from all inferior Beings, and from *Them* in particular, here is no running counter to that holy Jealousy which he professes for his own Name, no bringing perpetual Confusion into all parts of Religion; but the Scripture is perfectly consistent with it self: We see all proceeding from the *One God the Father* as the Original from whom are all Things, and issuing in his Glory as the ultimate End, for to him are all Things. We see him the *Head* of all, even of *Christ himself*, 1 Cor. 11. 3. and greater than he, John 14. 28. We now worship the Son to the Glory of the Father, Phil. 2. 11. And we know that at the End the Son himself shall be subject unto Him who hath put all things under him, that GOD may be all in all, 1 Cor. 15. 28.

§. 26. You might expect, it may be, that we should take some notice of those *Circumstantial Evidences* which our Author hath amass'd together for the farther Confirmation of his Doctrine. Were I ambitious of triumphing over an Adversary, and took pleasure merely in exposing the Weakness of his Arguments, I should be tempted to go on; but this I count a mean Thing. As to some few of the *Twenty Circumstantial Evidences* which might seem at first view to be of more Weight, I persuade my self that any one who hath consider'd what hath been already offer'd, will find no great Difficulty in answering these. And I believe, our Author himself will not expect that any Person should be won over by these *circumstantial Evidences*, who could not be convinced by the *overbearing Light* of the former *direct Proofs*. We may therefore very well be allowed to pass them by.

Only let me beg leave for a Word or two to the Last; because, *It is*, says our Author, *found in the Lips of almost all Christians*, (n) namely, *That nothing less than the Blood of him that was true God could make satisfaction to divine Justice, equal to the Offences that were given to it by our Sins*. I think our Author himself hath answered this Argument: *It is not*, says he, *within our present Reach to know how far the Power of a Creature can go, how glorious and powerful and perfect a Creature God can make* (o). Surely then, for any thing he can pretend to say to the contrary from Reason, there might be a Creature so glorious,
so

(n) P. 114.

(o) P. 98.

so perfect, as to be able to make *Satisfaction to Divine Justice, equal to the Offences that had been given to it by our Sins* : and I am pretty well assur'd, he can produce no Text of Scripture where God hath *assumed this Property, and peculiarized it to Himself*, to be capable of satisfying his own Justice for the Offences of Men. This is indeed an Argument purely human, The Scripture never says a Word of *infinite Satisfaction*, never ascribes the Virtue and Efficacy of *Christ's* Sufferings to his being the *true God* ; nor doth any where intimate that this was necessary, where yet there was the greatest Occasion for mentioning it, if indeed it had been so. 'Tis all their own Inference. And as it often happens, when Men would seem to be *wise above what is written*, and to go deeper into the Mysteries of the Gospel than the *Apostles* themselves did, they generally do but confound and spoil all ; so it is here. For in truth, while they think by their vain Reasonings to magnify and exalt the Satisfaction of *Christ*, they really destroy it, and bring utter Confusion upon that noble Contrivance of divine Wisdom. For if he be the *True God*, he himself was offended equally with the Father. Did he then satisfy *himself*, and doth he intercede with himself in virtue of the Satisfaction he made to Himself ? If so, ought we not in consequence of this to come to him *by Himself*, as we come by him to the Father ? Or, doth he pass by Sin *without a Satisfaction* made to him, and we come to him tho equally offended, and are accepted of him, without a Satisfaction ? And thus, I come to the same one God by virtue of a Satisfaction and without regard to a Satisfaction : the same true God, the *same one offended Being*, was satisfy'd and was not satisfy'd : the True God in the Person of the Father was inexorable and insisted on an *Equivalent* ; the same true God in the Person of the Son admits the Sinner, without insisting upon any Satisfaction at all. Which of these two Suppositions (*i. e.* whether *Christ* satisfy'd himself, or whether he accepts the Sinner without a Satisfaction) the good Christians who have this Argument continually in their Mouths, will chuse, I know not.

But, Sir, I can assure you, this Confusion, this Darkness and Inconsistency arises all from their own Scheme. The Scripture never says any thing like this, *That nothing less than the Blood of him who is true God could make*

Atonement.

Atonement for Sin. 'Tis merely, as I said before, an inference of their own : how just you shall see. St. Paul in his Epist. to the *Hebrews*, says, that *It is not possible that the Blood of Bulls and Goats should take away Sins.* Hence our Author concludes, *That nothing less than the Blood of him who was true God could do it.* A large Step indeed ! If the Blood of Bulls and Goats will not do, is there anything to be found sufficient between them and God ? These are very distant Ideas : but see the Connexion, I can't see any certain Reason, says our Author, why God might not have appointed the Blood of Bulls and Goats, to be a sufficient Atonement for our Sins ; or why it was impossible that it should be sufficient, but upon this account only, because it was not an Equivalent. Now in their Apprehension, Nothing could be an Equivalent Sacrifice, or Satisfaction equal to all the infinite Offences of the Millions of Mankind that are redeem'd, but the Sufferings of him who was God. I do freely grant for my own part, that when the Apostle saith, *It was not possible that the Blood of Bulls and Goats should take away Sins ;* it doth imply, that it was for some Reasons not becoming God to pass by Sins upon the account of such Sacrifices. But, will this warrant them to say, that Nothing less than an absolute Equivalent could answer the Design of God in appointing a Sacrifice for Sin ? This I think is too daring. Might not God say with reference to such bold Determiners, as of old to Job, *Who are these that darken Counsel by Words without Knowledge ? Where were ye when I ordained my Son to be the Lamb of God that should take away the Sins of the World ?* Did these Men concert this grand Affair with God, and enter into all the Views of infinite Wisdom, and the Principles upon which he acted ; that they should be able to assure us, that there was no other Reason that did determine God to reject the Sacrifices of Beasts as insufficient ; that there could be no other Reason but this alone, because they were not an Equivalent Satisfaction for the Sins of Men ? But what if I can suggest another Reason ? It is an Observation frequently to be met with in the Writings of Christian Divines, That it was requisite a Satisfaction should be made in and by the same Nature that had sinned. We have many Hints of this in Scripture. See particularly the second Chapt. of this Epist. to the *Heb.* from vers. 10. to the end. Now if it were necessary that he should be *Man* who was

to make Atonement for the Sins of Men; our Author may see how it can be said, that it was not possible for the Blood of Animals to have been appointed for this End by the Sovereign Will of God, tho we should suppose that the Justice of God might have been satisfied with something less than an Equivalent. You see then, there is no Necessity of taking in our Author's Supposition in order to the making good that Assertion of the Apostle. There may be another Reason assigned for it, and that founded upon Scripture; whereas his Notion of a Satisfaction equal to all the infinite Offences of the Millions of Mankind, is not, as I know of, once mentioned in Scripture; 'tis merely an Inference of their own, and if it hath no other Foundation than these Words of the Apostle, entirely groundless. And if that be not secur'd, you easily perceive that his whole Argument falls to the ground.

However, let us proceed a little farther with our Author upon his own Supposition. If such an Equivalent, says he, be necessary, then they who deny the Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ, are obliged to show where this Equivalent is to be found. And so say I to those who do assert the Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ. I don't find but they are like to be as much at a loss as the others (p). For after all they must own that the Suffering was *Finite*, being the Suffering only of the human Nature, a finite created Nature. Whatever there may be of Value arising from the Excellency of the Nature suffering, or from its special Relation to and Union with God; this the Others can admit of as well as they. They say indeed, that *He who suffered was God*, in which they think they have the Advantage. Now if the Notion of *God and Man constituting one Person* could be made intelligible (of which by and by) we shall find it will be so far from making out an infinite Satisfaction, that it really leaves no Possibility of a Satisfaction, unless we can suppose the Infinite Being offering himself a Sacrifice to the same Infinite Being. Their *Distinction of Persons in the Infinite Being* will not help them out; for it is true of *this Person*, Christ who offers himself, that *He* could not be satisfied, as *He is the one God*, with any Thing less than an Equivalent; and yet it is as *the One God* that he pays this Equivalent, for

or this is it, which according to the Hypothesis makes the Equivalent, namely, *being paid by the One true God.* so that it is the same infinite *Person*, who at the same time both makes the Satisfaction and accepts the Satisfaction, *Christ as God* offering himself unto himself as God, and paying to himself the Price of our Redemption as a *glorious Equivalent for Sinners.* Is this the Doctrine of our Redemption by the precious Blood of Christ, the Doctrine which *St. Paul* so much gloried in? Let me desire you, Sir, to look into the Scripture, you will find no such Darkness and Confusion there. God in admirable Wisdom, and by an amazing Instance of Love, *sent his only-begotten Son to be the Propitiation for our Sins.* When *Sacrifices and Offerings, &c.* would not do; when God could not in honour accept of These instead of the Death of the Sinner which the Law threatned, then says this only-begotten Son of God, *Lo, I come to do thy Will, O God, a Body hast thou prepared me.* And when we consider what he was; when we read the Account the Apostle gives of this glorious Person in the beginning of his Epist. to the *Hebrews, viz.* That he was *the Brightness of the Father's Glory, the express Image of his Person, He by whom God made the Worlds;* surely we may see enough in him to answer all the Designs that we can conceive God might propose in requiring a Sacrifice; and need not make any Difficulty of believing, That *the Blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God may cleanse us from all Unrighteousness, tho It was not possible that the Blood of Bulls and Goats should take away Sins.* It was impossible in the Nature of Things that GOD himself should make Satisfaction; but here is One, the most glorious of all Beings below GOD, He by the Appointment of God doth give Himself a Ransom for us. Upon the whole, If we will take the Scripture Account of *Christ's* making Satisfaction, I think it is so far from proving that *he must be the One God,* that on the contrary, it doth rather appear to be a plain Demonstration that *he cannot be the One true God.*

§. 27. We have now done with what I thought needful to remark upon our Author's Proofs of his Doctrine. But I must crave your Patience a little longer, while I take notice of *some things inferior to the Dignity of God-head really and properly attributed to the Son and to*

the Holy Spirit, and consider how our Author accounts for them.

That Christ was Man, is agreed by all, and that the Things which belong to him, *as Man*, cannot be ascribed to the Godhead. But say they, *This inferior Nature was united to the Godhead*. So our Author, *There is an Union of the Godhead to the inferior Nature of Man in the Person of Jesus Christ* (q). You may remember, Sir, that our Author had told us before, that the word *Person* signifies, in the common Language of Mankind, *One single, intelligent, voluntary Agent, or a Principle of Action that hath Understanding and Will* (r). I hope that Christ *as God* (before he became Man) was *one single, intelligent, voluntary Agent*: and was not Christ, *as Man*, also *one single, intelligent, voluntary Agent*? Is not the Godhead of Christ, *a Principle of Action that hath Understanding and Will*? and is not the human Nature, the Human Soul of Christ which our Author frequently speaks of, *another Principle of Action, that hath Understanding and Will*? Why then, according to the common Sense and Language of Mankind, here are Two PERSONS in Christ as well as two Natures. Our Friend may say, if he pleases, that these Two Persons are united together; but when he talks of the Two Natures being united in the Person of Jesus Christ, and of the Properties and Actions of either Nature being ascribed sometimes to the whole Person, I hope he will not say, that here also he uses the word Person in a Sense near a-kin to the common Sense of the Word (s); since, according to his own Account of the common Sense of the Word, this one Person of Jesus Christ is really *Two Persons*. Behold now; One while we have Three Persons, Three single intelligent Agents, declared to be *One Being*, one God; again, We have *Two Beings* as distant as GOD and the Creature, Two single Principles of Action that have Understanding and Will, the one Infinite the other Finite, making up *one Person*. What is this but to confound all Sense and all Language?

But, Sir, I must again intreat you not to impute all this Perplexity and Confusion which they have introduced in speaking of the *Person of Christ*, to our sacred Writings; it all arises from their own Scheme, their Inferences drawn out (as they imagine) from Scripture. You have read the Gospels;

(q) P. 174.

(r) P. 143.

(s) P. 146.

els; do they ever speak, or do they any where give the least Intimation of two intelligent Principles, *two distinct Minds* in the Person of Christ? These Gentlemen must suppose it, their Hypothesis requires it; but since our Lord himself, in all his Discourses, and his Disciples who made him known to the World, never gave the least Hint of it (tho there might be many Occasions for it) but on the contrary, He ever speaks of himself, and they speak of him as *one single, intelligent, voluntary Agent*; we may well suspect this Doctrine of theirs, *viz. Two intelligent voluntary Principles of Action in Christ*, as an Invention of their own, fram'd only to serve an Hypothesis.

Let us look into the Account the Gospel gives of Christ's Incarnation. Here one would expect the first Notice of this strange Doctrine. Their Scheme says, that the eternal Son of God took to him a human Body and a reasonable Soul; and being united to this human Body and reasonable Soul, became *one Person*. But is this the Language of Scripture, when it speaks of this great Event? We are told that the Word became *Flesh*; that God sent forth his Son, made (or born) of a Woman; that as the Children were partakers of *Flesh and Blood*, He also himself likewise took part of the same: We read of a *Body prepared for him*: We read of *Jesus Christ being come in the Flesh*. But where is the *Human Soul* all this while, the principal Part of the Human Nature, which, according to them, he was to unite unto Himself? Which, by the way, is a Phrase the Scripture is an utter stranger to, and indeed is far short of what the Scripture plainly represents, when it speaks of the Incarnation of the Son of God: *God sent his Son in the Flesh. He was made (or born) of a Woman. He was made in the Likeness of sinful Flesh, and was found in fashion as a Man*. These are Expressions very different from that of his being united to a Man, or taking a Man into some special Relation to himself.

Pray, Sir, will you read with Attention those Passages of Scripture which give us the Account of this wonderful Dispensation. See if it be not the very same Being, the self-same intelligent Principle, that acted in the Body and conversed with Men, that was before in Heaven. I do appeal to you, whether this be not the plain obvious Sense of many of those Passages, and judge by this who hath need of *Evasions*. *In the Beginning was the Word—— and the Word was made*
Flesh,

*Flesh and dwelt among us. No Man hath ascended up to Heaven, but he that came down from Heaven, even the Son of Man who was in Heaven. What, and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before? I came forth from the Father, and am come into the World; again, I leave the World and go to the Father, John 16. 28. Upon this, say the Disciples, Now speakest thou plainly; and I believe you think so too. Can any thing be more plain than it is from these Words, that the intelligent Principle that was then in the Body and convers'd with them, was not then with the Father, was not then in Heaven; and yet had been with the Father, had been in Heaven before it came into the World? Again, Glorify thou me with the Glory which I had with thee before the World was. Our Author is so sensible of the Force of such Passages as these, that he is willing to suppose, with some others of his Party, that the Human Soul of our Lord Jesus Christ had a Being, and was personally united to the divine Nature, long before his Body was born of the Virgin, even from the very Foundation of the World (t). He says, There is nothing in the whole Word of God, that he knows of, which discountenances such a Supposition as this; and therefore, having occasion for it, he hopes it will be granted him. I do agree with him, that there are a great many Texts, both of the Old and New Testament, which 'tis very hard (yea impossible) to account for, without admitting this Opinion: So far I mean, that the human Soul, the intelligent Principle that animated the Body of Jesus, and dwelt in Flesh, had a Being long before his Body was born of the Virgin, even before the World was: But that this was a Being distinct from the Logos, another intelligent Agent personally united to the divine Nature in the Person of the Son, is (for any thing I can see in the Word of God) purely an Invention of their own; just like that of the Socinians (which we had occasion to mention before) of the Man Christ Jesus being taken up into Heaven some time before his preaching to Men; which hath been justly exploded. As they wanted that *Salvo* to reconcile some Scriptures to their Hypothesis; so doth our Author want this Supposition to reconcile those Expressions of Scripture which signify something inferior to Godhead before his Incarnation, with the Notion of his being the*

(t) P. 177.

the true God, who was made Flesh; but the Scripture is as entirely silent of the One as of the Other.

On the contrary, The Scripture speaks of him in the highest Descriptions of his Glory in that *pre-existent* State (as it is call'd) as being the very same intelligent Principle that afterwards dwelt in Flesh: *Ye know the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who when He was rich, for our sakes became poor. Let that Mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus, who being in the Form of God, thought it not Robbery to be equal with God* (by the way, our Author doth not insist on this (u) Interpretation) *but made Himself of no Reputation, (or emptied himself) and took upon him the Form of a Servant, and was made in the Likeness of Men: And being found in fashion as a Man, He humbled himself, and became obedient unto Death—Wherefore God also highly exalted him, &c.* Is not here plainly the same one intelligent Being, or Principle, or Agent spoken of, as acting all along, and passing through these different States, being heretofore in the *Form of God*, then laying aside that Form, and taking upon him the *Form of a Servant*, and *made in the Likeness of Men*, &c. and upon the account of his having thus humbled himself, *highly exalted*? Here, I doubt, our Author and his Friends must help you to some of *their Subtilties and nice Arts of Distinction*, or you will never be able to perceive Two intelligent Principles united in the *one Person* spoken of in this Text.

You will find it no less difficult to bring in the Two intelligent Principles into the Apostle's Account of Christ, in the first Chapter of his Epistle to the *Hebrews*: *God hath in these last Times spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed Heir of all Things, by whom also he made the Worlds; who being the Brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person, and upholding all Things by the Word of his Power, when He had by himself purged our Sins, sat down on the right Hand of the Majesty on high.* And when he says in the following Chapter, *As the Children are partakers of Flesh and Blood, He also himself likewise took part of the same: And again, Sacrifices and Offerings thou wouldest not, but a Body hast thou prepared me—Then said I, Lo, I come to do thy Will, O God: Who is the [HE] spoken of, &c.* is it not the

(u) P. 106,

the same intelligent, voluntary Agent, who was the *Brightness of the Father's Glory*? &c. or, is it another intelligent, voluntary Agent united to that which was the *Brightness of the Father's Glory*? The Scripture Account, I think, is plain enough; but when you bring in their Hypothesis, all is Confusion and the utmost Perplexity.

But says our Author, *He that was born of the Virgin was Immanuel*. You may remember what we said of his being called *the Lord our Righteousness*. Nor do we deny that the *Child* who was born to us, hath the Name of a *Mighty God*. We have granted, that *He who was of the Fathers according to the Flesh*, is over all, and is called *God*. And thus we may say, *God was manifest in the Flesh*, (if that be the genuine Reading of the Text) This is perfectly agreeable to the Prophecy, *To us a Child is born*—— and His Name, the Name of that Child, *shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, a mighty God*. As there is not in this or in any of the Passages mention'd by our Author, the least Hint of Two intelligent Agents united in one Person, or any Intimation that this Child, this Saviour should at the same time be *One Person* and *Two Persons*, Two Persons in the common Sense of the Word, One Person in a Sense of the Word that was never heard of before; as, I say, there is no hint of this, so we see no Occasion for it. That Text in *Acts* 20. 28. we know was read otherwise in *Irenaeus's* Time (x); he cites it, *The Church of the Lord*: And if we read it as in our Translation; by the Term *God* may be understood the *Father*, and yet there would be no doubt among Christians who it was the Apostle meant when he said, *which he hath purchased with his own Blood*; as in some like Passages of *St. John's* Epistle, every one knows by the Things that are said there, that *Christ* is the Person meant, tho he be not expressly named, and the Words, according to the usual Construction, might seem to refer to some other antecedent mentioned before (y). His last Passage, *God laid down his Life for us*, is not Scripture, but a Mistake of the Apostle's Words. *Herein perceive we Love*, says the Apostle: [Many Copies read not of *God*] because *He* [*Ekeinos*] i. e. *Christ* laid down his Life for us, as every one would understand it; for so he uses to express him-

(x) And in the best Copies still.

(y) Vid. 1 *Joh.* 2. 6, 28. — 3. 2, 5, 16.

himself in speaking of Christ, even when he had been speaking of another Person before. And this agrees with the saying of this same Apostle in the next Chapter: *Herein is Love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be a Propitiation for us*; and to that of another Apostle, *God commended his Love towards us, in that while we were yet Sinners, Christ died for us*, Rom. 3. 8.

Now if this (which we have given) be the true Account of the *Incarnation* of the Son of God, you will own the Matter is fully decided: for none will suppose that the eternal necessary Being could be thus really humbled, really suffer and die. This made me say before, that according to the Notion *Christians* had in those Times of *Christ's coming in the Flesh*, there could be no danger (it was indeed impossible) that they should take him to be the *One true God*. But let a Being be ever so excellent and glorious, if he be not a necessary, self-existing Being, it is not impossible that he should undergo such Humiliation; there is no contradiction in supposing him to pass through such a Change: and therefore (not giving up our Reason to Faith, which, strictly speaking, can never be, but) with Reason we *can* believe it; and upon the Report of the Gospel we *do* believe this concerning Christ, and adore the amazing Condescension. Here was indeed a *Love that passes Knowledge*, here was *Grace* indeed, here was an Example of *Humility and Condescension*, that admits of no parallel! Not a *relative* Humiliation, a *relative* or *nominal* suffering of the Son of God, by his uniting himself (as they speak) to a Man, *i. e.* in truth to another Person, while *He himself* really suffer'd nothing, underwent no diminution, but was all the while possessed of the highest Glory, of the same unchangeable Blessedness. No; we believe that *HE* who was in the *Beginning with God*, and who was a *God*, really came in *Flesh* and dwelt among us; that he actually laid aside the *Glory which he had with the Father before the World was*; that he divested himself of the *Form of God*, and really took upon him the *Form of a Servant*, and was made in the *Likeness of Men*, and being found in fashion as a *Man*, became obedient unto *Death*, even the *Death of the Cross*. We believe, according to the Scriptures, that the same excellent Being, who was the *Brightness of the Father's Glory*, the express *Image of his Person*, by whom he made the *Worlds*, was, for a *Time*, made lower than the *Angels*, and tasted *Death for every Man*; and believing this, we own

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with St. Paul; a *Breadth, and Length, and Depth, and Height of the Love of Christ that passes Knowledge.*

Moreover, if this be the Scripture Account of Christ's Person, that he was *one single intelligent Agent*, we have many Declarations concerning *himself*, which we know to be utterly incompatible with the one supreme God. Their usual Refuge, that he speaks of himself sometimes with respect to *one Nature, sometimes with respect to the other*, will stand them in no stead, Nay, and supposing this strange Notion of *Two intelligent Agents making one Person*, we shall find some Things so manifestly spoken of the *entire Person*, as will effectually preclude this Way of escape: as particularly when our Lord says, that *he knew not the Day of Judgment.* For tho it is allowed to *affirm* of the Person what belongs to either Nature, yet I fear it will be accounted no better than Equivocation to *deny* of the Person what belongs to either. For certainly, if it belongs to either Nature, it is true of the Person which is supposed to be constituted of both Natures. By the same Liberty of speaking might one not deny that Christ is *God*, meaning it of his human Nature; and again, on the other hand, deny that Christ is *Man*, meaning it of his divine Nature? But now, when Christ says expressly, *My Father is greater than I; I can of my self do nothing; Of that Day and Hour knoweth none, no not the Son, but my Father only;* with others of the like Nature: are we not naturally led to believe that he speaks these Things of his *whole Person*, and consequently, that he who speaks thus of Himself, must be in his whole Person inferior to God? The *Bulk of common Christians* surely could never find out how to explain such express Declarations concerning the Inferiority of the *Person of Christ*, (which indeed run through the whole Gospel) and make them comport with his being God equal with the Father. Would you imagine that the kind and faithful Redeemer would ever lay such *Stumbling-blocks or Temptations in the Way of his People*, and leave them in his Word for the Use of all Ages? Can you persuade your self that He would have let those Passages stand in the holy Scriptures as our Rule of Faith and Practice, which have such a natural Tendency to diminish his own Dignity, to give up his Divine Prerogatives, and to deceive the Humble and Simple into such pernicious Snares, and that in a Point of so high and awful Importance?

§. 28. And now, Sir, I must leave you to judge of the Matter in debate between us. You have seen the whole Bible from one end to the other always speaking of GOD as *one Person*. We have made it appear from a Multitude of Passages, both of the Old Testament and the New, that the antient *Jews*, and *Christ* and his *Apostles*, when they spake of GOD (absolutely as the supreme Being) did plainly mean the *Father*. You have seen this Title of the *One God* or the *only true God* appropriated to the Father, and that in exprefs contradistinction from the Son. Our Adversaries assert, that there are *Three Persons subsisting in the one Godhead*; that *Father, Son, and Spirit, are the One God*: This they generally declare to be the *Fundamental Doctrine* of Christianity, our Author accounts it the *Substance and Glory of the Gospel*. This Fundamental Doctrine they pretend not to find in any exprefs Declarations of Scripture. There is nothing said of it in the New Testament; not the least Notice taken of it in any of those sacred Writings upon any Occasion; tho it be by our Adversary's own Confession, a Doctrine so sublime, so strange and surprizing, so shocking to Reason, and carries in it an *Appearance of Contradiction*. However, it is pretended that the Scripture Proofs of it lie so plain and open to the View of any common Reader, that has never been prepossess'd with other Notions, that they cannot but think, that God requires the Belief of it where the Bible is known and read. We have therefore consider'd the main Evidences our Author had to produce, and I hope have fully convinc'd you, without the help of *critical Subtily*, and *turning Arts of Evasion*, only by plain Observations from Scripture, (most of them such as do only require a due Attention in reading the Bible it self in a common Translation) that there is nothing spoken of Christ in Scripture, but what is perfectly consistent with his being inferior to, and distinct from Him who is the *Only true God*: Whereas on the other hand we have shown that he expressly disclaims, in his whole Person, that which must belong to Him who is the supreme God; and acknowledges that *the Father is greater than He*.

I am glad that I have had this opportunity of clearing the Bible of so great Incumbrance, and our Religion of so invincible an Objection (z), as I fear this Notion of the

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(z) Vid, a Letter of a Clergyman to Mr, *Whiston*, in his Reply to the Earl of *Nottingham*.

Trinity which they have advanc'd, would be to all thinking Men of other Religions, if this were to be reckoned a Fundamental Doctrine of Christianity. I flatter my self that I have said enough to prevent any Objection from you upon this Head. No, Sir, the Christian Religion is an *intelligible* Religion; and being understood, I doubt not but it will appear to you a Religion every way worthy of God; and the more you consider it, the more clearly will you perceive the Evidence of its divine Original: not because it contains in it Doctrines *shocking to Reason, which one can hardly suppose should enter into the Minds of Men* (a); but because there appears in the whole Plan of it, such admirable display of the divine Perfections, as may convince a serious Mind, that none but God could be the Author of it. But this I must leave to your farther Reflections, wishing that you and all Men may at length come to the Knowledge of *the only true God, and of Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, whom to know is eternal Life.*

(a) See our Author's Moral Argument, p. 146.





APPENDIX.



R. Watts is so free as to confess, that *In his diligent search after Truth in the Bible, he should have been glad to have taken up with some Ideas of the Trinity, that might have been less subject to the Cavils of Human Reason, and more easily comprehended and reconciled (a).* It would indeed be an exceeding Pleasure to me, if what I have offer'd might contribute towards his attaining this Satisfaction. But when I find that his present Sentiments are (as he tell us) *the Result of a Search divested of all Prejudice (b);* and he renders hearty Thanks to God, who hath so guarded the Freedom of his Thoughts, as to keep them religiously submissive to plain Revelation; and has made these later Inquiries a Means to establish his Faith in this blessed Article, That the Father, Son and Spirit, are three Persons and one God, and to confirm it by juster and brighter Evidences, than he was possess'd of before; I cannot flatter my self, that any Thing I can say upon the Subject should now move him. However, I hope he will give me leave also to render my hearty Thanks to God, who hath so directed the Freedom of my Thoughts, as to lead me into a clearer Understanding of the plain Revelation he hath given to Men, and hath brought me to see that Light in his Word which renders this sublime Doctrine of the *Three Persons concerned in our Salvation* intelligible, and frees the glorious Gospel of Christ from the *Incumbrance* of those inconsistent Notions which some have imagin'd were to be fairly drawn out of it, and which many would impose upon Christians as necessary Articles of Faith. No doubt had this been the Result of Mr. Watts's Search, he would have been as hearty
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(a) P. 168.

(b) Pref. p. 4.

in rendring Thanks for being freed from these Notions, as he is now for his being established in them. If he be now so fixed as not to be moved, we must leave him to enjoy the Satisfaction of *submitting his Faith* to what he imagines to be *Divine Revelation*. I blame not such Submission: It is undoubtedly (being rightly understood) the Duty of every reasonable Creature; and may be acceptable to God, tho a Person should mistake the Mind of God in the Revelation, and the Doctrine which he thinks himself obliged by that Authority to believe, should not really be found there.

But if there be no Hope of freeing Mr. *Watts* from the *Incumbrance* of this inexplicable Doctrine, (as he could have wish'd some time ago) I am not without hope that I may prevail with him to extend his *Charity* to those who are persuaded that this which he contends for is not the Doctrine of Revelation, and upon that Account do not submit their Faith to it.

By what I have seen of Mr. *Watts's* Writings, and heard of his Character, I cannot but respect and value him for his Ingenuity and Piety, and *Charity* too, tho I think it yet too restrained. We cannot but be desirous that such Persons should at least have favourable Thoughts of us, tho they may see reason to differ from us. Indeed, when I read what he says upon his *last Proposition save one*, I began to please my self with the Hope that he would not exclude us from the Number of *Christians*, tho he could not but think us mistaken: I was sorry to find these Hopes dashed in the succeeding *Chapt.* and that *last Proposition* ending in a Fit of Zeal, giving us up as guilty of those *damnable Heresies* which will bring upon the Professors of them *swift Destruction*; and encouraging his pious Readers to look on us as *denying the Lord that bought us*. However, since in the *foregoing Proposition* he hath shewed a good Will to Charity, and seems disposed to extend it as far as the *Defence of the Christian Faith*, and the *Honours due to Christ* will give him leave; I will make one Attempt to draw out his Charity (it may be) to a little farther length.

Mr. *Watts*, I doubt not, will grant me this, That it can never be necessary for the *Defence of the Christian Faith*, to exclude those whom the Gospel doth not reckon among the *Unbelievers*; and that a Regard to the Honour of

of Christ can never oblige him to condemn those whom Christ doth not condemn, who doubtless is as much concerned to maintain his own Honour as we can be. I desire therefore Mr. *Watts* to consider, that it is not enough to warrant such Censures, that in his Judgment, no Man can pay due Honours to the Son or Spirit, unless he believe them to be the true God. Hath Christ said, that he will not accept any Man who doth not give him all the Honour that is his due, and particularly, who doth not thus honour him? Let Mr. *Watts* look over the Account himself hath given us of the Language in which the Requisites of Salvation are generally express'd, as they relate to Christ or the Holy Spirit (c). Doth he find there any Expressions that carry this in it? Surely, we may very well leave it to Christ to judge what is most for his Honour. The zealous Disciples thought it would be most for the Honour of their Master to call for Fire from Heaven upon the People that would not receive him; Christ thought it more for his Honour and the Honour of his Religion, to forbear. Many are at this Day of the same Mind with those Disciples, notwithstanding the Rebuke they met with from our Lord himself. Others judge it necessary, out of Regard to the Honour of Christ, to exclude from the Christian Church all who cannot be satisfied to worship him as the Supreme God, and to express the utmost Abhorrence of them: supposing him to be really so, it may be that Christ may think it more for his Honour to bear with them and accept of their sincere Love, tho they do not think so highly of him as he deserves. When will Christians learn that so reasonable piece of Modesty, to judge of Persons Acceptance with Christ by what he himself hath notified of his Purpose, rather than by Reasonings of their own about the Fitness of the Thing; which is in effect to direct him whom to accept, and whom to reject?

In like manner with respect to the Ability and Sufficiency of the Persons for the Discharge of the several Offices in the Work of our Redemption and Salvation (which is
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another thing Mr. *Watts* insists on) it is plainly a very different Thing to be satisfy'd that they are capable, and to have a Dependence and Expectation consequent to such a Persuasion: this, I say, is very different from the knowing perfectly all that is necessary to give that Ability or Sufficiency. The honest Countryman knows that the Sun hath Power to diffuse Light and Heat over the whole Earth, tho it never enter'd into his Imagination that it must be so much bigger than the Earth, as it really is, in order to do this. He expects the Return of Day and Night, of Summer and Winter, tho he hath no Thought of the vast Motion (whether of the Sun or of the Earth) that is necessary to produce this Return of the Seasons. Thus in the Case before us, Mr. *Watts* judges that the *Characters and Offices which the Son and Spirit sustain in the Matter of our Salvation, and the Duties which we owe them, do require the Perfections of a God* (d). Well, but doth the Scripture say, that no Man can receive Christ as a sufficient Saviour, &c. unless he believe him to be the True God? Or, doth Christ say, that he will receive none, except they pay him this Honour? I once more desire our Author to look over the Passages himself hath quoted, in which the *Requisites of Salvation are express'd, as they relate to Christ and the Spirit*. And I would recommend it to all Christians, to form their Censures and direct their Practice in treating their Fellow-Citizens, not by their own Judgment of what they should think fit to require for the maintaining the Honour of Christ, and the securing a right Trust in him; but by what Christ himself hath thought fit to require, and what the Scripture makes necessary to a right Believing on him.

Mr. *Watts* doth very honestly allow of a *free and impartial Enquiry*. His *Advices* relating to this Matter are, I think, both reasonable and pious. He may seem perhaps to some, to warp a little in the following *Directions* to Christians for establishing themselves in the Faith. Be that as it will, I shall not enter into those
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Matters. But this I would say, In my Apprehension there can be little Expectation of a free impartial Enquiry about this Doctrine, while Men are under the Dread of falling into *damnable Heresy* if they should depart from the common Belief; or at least of being reputed as *Hereticks* among their Neighbours and Friends. As things now stand among us, there is too much ground to apprehend that many are afraid of being convinc'd: Some pious Christians in the Simplicity of their Hearts are afraid of being *perverted*; and therefore think it their Duty to avoid every thing that might tend to weaken their present Belief: Others, seeing what unhappy Consequences it might have with respect to their Circumstances in the World, if they should change their Opinion, are willing to hold to the received Notion. Not that I suppose they take up this Resolution in opposition to a real Conviction; but the Inconveniencies they are sensible would attend a Change of Sentiments, are I believe a Bias upon many, sufficient to carry them off from that free and full Enquiry which otherwise they might be willing to make.

However, as the Truth (that which I at present take to be so) hath by the Providence of God began to make its Way thro' all this Prejudice and Opposition; and, if one may judge by the Outcries and Fears of the Zealots and Bigots of the opposite Party, is daily making Advances; I may hope it will at length prevail. Some seem to be of the Mind that there is need of the *Secular Arm*, as well as of all the Power of Ecclesiastical Censures, to put a stop to its Progress. Some that are ashamed to avow this, have however thought it reasonable to put the Magistrate in mind of his Duty, *when factious Hereticks grow turbulent*: No doubt many will think them so, when they disturb the Minds of good People in their quiet Possession of the orthodox Faith, by producing Arguments that their Leaders know not how to deal with. The great *Champion* of the Establish'd Faith says, it's no wonder if the New Scheme do for awhile get ground, *because the Doctrine of the Trinity is thoroughly understood but by Few in comparison* (e).
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(e) Supplement to *Arian* Subscript. p. ult.

If this be a Reason for the prevailing of the New Scheme (as it's call'd) I don't expect to see very quickly a stop put to its Progress; for I am satisfy'd it will be long enough before the *Athanasian Doctrine* of the Trinity will be *thoroughly understood* by the Bulk of Christians. For I must own, that notwithstanding the great Opinion I have of Dr. *Waterland's* Abilities, I do not reckon him that great Genius, that Sir *Isaac Newton* in Divinity, which Mr. *Watts* seems to wish for, who should cast such Light upon this obscure Article of Faith as may give Mankind a clear understanding of it. We may indeed have another Doctrine of the Trinity clearer than that which is at present the generally receiv'd Doctrine; but I believe it to be impossible for Man or Angel to make us *thoroughly understand* the present Doctrine, *i. e.* to reconcile what they teach at one time concerning the *One God*, and what they teach at other times concerning the *three Persons*, and so to make us see their Doctrine consistent with it self.

For my part, I see no need of any *extraordinary Genius* to help us out in this Matter; We have in the Bible a Doctrine of the Trinity plain enough. And since it hath pleased God to bring it out of that Darkness and Obscurity under which it had lain for some Ages, as many other great important and plain Truths had done; I would hope that this may help to make the Way more easy for the propagating the glorious Gospel of the Redeemer to the Heathen Nations. That great Stumbling-block of the *Triune God* (a Notion, as far as appears, never heard of at the first Planting of the Gospel) being removed, the Time may be coming when Knowledge shall be increased, even the Knowledge of the Truth whereby Men shall be saved, the Knowledge of the *One God*, and of the *One Mediator between God and Men*, the *Man Christ Jesus*.

In the mean time, We doubt not but our Adversaries will concur with us in praying to the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, that he would give to all honest Inquirers after Truth the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation in the Knowledge of him; and grant unto them to be like minded

one towards another according to Christ Jesus, that we may with one Heart, and with one Mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Jesus Christ.

Now to him who is of Power to stablish us, To God only wise be Glory thro Jesus Christ, for ever. Amen.

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